PEMBINA SETTLEMENT.

LETTER

FROM

THE SECRETARY OF WAR,

TRANSMITTING

Report of Major Wood, relative to his expedition to Pembina Settlement, and the condition of affairs on the North-Western frontier of the Territory of Minnesota.

March 19, 1850.
Referred to the Committee on Military Affairs, and ordered to be printed.

War Department,
Washington, Feb. 25, 1850.

Sir: I have the honor to transmit herewith the report of Major Woods, the officer of the Army despatched to Pembina settlement, or to the Red river of the North, under the orders of the Secretary of War, in the summer of 1849, with such other documents relating to said expedition as are in possession of this Department, tending to show the condition of affairs on the north-western frontier of the territory of Minnesota, in answer to a resolution of the House of Representatives of the 13th instant.

The report of Brevet Capt. John Pope, of the Topographical Corps, is daily expected and when obtained will be laid before you. The delay attending the report of Capt. Pope, it is alleged, has arisen from affliction in his family.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully, your obed't serv't,

GEORGE W. CRAWFORD,
Secretary of War.

Hon. Howell Cobb,
Speaker of the House of Reps.

Adjutant General's Office,
Washington, April 18th, 1849.

Sir: It is proposed to establish a new military post on or near the Red river of the North and at a distance from Fort Gaines not exceeding 200 miles. For this purpose it is necessary to make a military examination of that country. You are assigned to this duty, which you will proceed to execute as soon after the receipt of these orders as may be practicable. The military force under your command on the expedition will be the company of Dragoons (D) now at Fort Snelling and destined for the garrison of Fort Gaines. You will proceed to the region of the Red river of the North by the way of Fort Gaines or such other route as you may deem best, and

on the completion of this duty you will return to your proper station. You will extend the examination as far north as the boundary of the U. States, and report to this office all the information you may be able to collect in regard to the best location of a military post in that region, in respect of health, subsistence, facilities of building and access, and all other advantages which in your judgment and experience will suggest.

The establishment of this post, as all other military posts in the Indian country, being with a view to our Indian relations, you will also collect and report all the information you can obtain of the number, character and habits of the Indians in that region, their means of subsistence, their disposition towards the United States, and the influence exerted on them by the Hudson's Bay Company by trade, presents or otherwise.

It is not doubted that the company of dragoons assigned to your command for this expedition is a sufficient military escort; but at our distance from that remote frontier and from the best means of information, the question must be committed to your judgment. If you shall be of the opinion from your knowledge of the state of the Indian tribes in that country, that the expedition cannot safely be undertaken with the force assigned you, you will delay your march and report forthwith to this office for further instructions.

A medical officer and officer of Topographical Engineers will be ordered to report to you. You will transmit such topographical reports and maps as the nature of your march may enable the topographical officer to prepare.

A copy of the letter of the Secretary of the Interior to the Secretary of War, in consequence of which this expedition has been ordered, is herewith sent you, that you may better comprehend the objects the government have in contemplation in that country.

It is unnecessary to direct your attention to the importance of cultivating a good feeling on the part of the Indians you may meet towards the United States, and of impressing upon them the necessity of peace among themselves.

Respectfully,

(Signed) R. JONES,
Adj't Gen'l.

Bvt. Maj. Samuel Woods,
Capt. 6th Infantry, Fort Snelling, Iowa.

Department of the Interior,
Washington, 4th April, 1849.

Sir: I have the honor to submit for your consideration a letter of the 3d inst. from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, with the copies of papers therein transmitted, in relation to the present condition of our Indian affairs on the Upper Mississippi and near the line between our territory and that of the British Government, as deserving early attention.

The developments therein made appear to be such as to render it expedient that some measures should be adopted to correct the evils which must necessarily grow out of the present state of things in that region, not only with a view to the peace and safety of our own citizens, but to protect the Indians from future suffering, as well as prevent border difficulties.

Upon consideration it appears to me that the most certain method to remedy the present and prevent anticipated evils, would be to cause a treaty to be made with a view of purchasing a moderate portion of the

Indian country adjacent to our boundary line, and upon the Red river of the North, and thereby open the country to agricultural settlement, for which it is represented to be well adapted, and place within our own limits a body of citizens ready, not only to observe our laws respecting intercourse with the Indians, but willing and able to prevent any violations of them or incursions into our territory by those connected with the British settlements north of the boundary.

As, however, the formation of such a settlement might be the work of three or four years, I am of opinion that the establishment of a military post at some suitable point near the line, at an early day, would greatly tend, in the mean while, to accomplish the objects which are deemed important.

By making a purchase from the Indians, they would necessarily be brought under the more immediate control and influence of our agents, and becoming more dependent upon them, would be much more easily controlled, while the influence now exercised over them by the agents of the Hudson Bay Company would be proportionately decreased.

Very, &c.,

(Signed) T. EWING,
Secretary.

To the PRESIDENT
Of the United States.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
Office of Indian Affairs, April 3, 1849.

SIR: I have the honor to submit herewith, for your information and consideration, copies of a report and accompanying papers, recently received from J. E. Fletcher, Esq., Indian Agent on the Upper Missouri, in relation to the state of affairs on our north-western boundary line, in the vicinity of the Red river of the North, which would seem to require some attention from our government, in order to prevent injustice being done to our citizens engaged in trade with the Indians, by unlawful and injurious interference of British subjects, and to put a stop to our Indians being supplied with ardent spirits, and the great destruction of the game, by persons from the British side of the line. The great and wanton destruction of the buffalo, it is known, is becoming a serious evil, and has already caused much discontent among our Indians, leading in one or two instances to the murder of persons unlawfully on our side of the line. These buffalo are almost the only means of subsistence for some fifty or sixty thousand Indians in that region and the Upper Missouri. They are rapidly diminishing in numbers, and their range becoming more and more circumscribed, and they must soon disappear unless some means be adopted to prevent their great annual and unnecessary destruction by other persons than our Indians. Their rapid decrease and more circumscribed range, must in a few years bring the tribes in that quarter into competition for them, which will lead to sanguinary and exterminating wars, or cause those tribes or some of them to precipitate themselves upon our frontier Indians, and our advanced settlements, in order to procure the means of subsistence.

For the protection of British citizens and the preservation of peace and good order on their side of the line, there is a considerable Military Post on the Red river of the North, not far from the line, at which there was

not long since, and probably is now, a force of about four hundred men; and the subject herein submitted would seem to involve the question of the expediency and propriety of a post on our side for similar purposes.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully your obedient servant,

(Signed) WILLIAM MEDILL,
Commissioner of Indian Affairs.

HON. THOMAS EWING,
Secretary of the Interior.

ST. PETERS,
Winnebago Agency, February 12, 1849.

SIR: In obedience to instructions contained in your letter of 26th May, 1848, I have availed myself of my position to ascertain the facts "in relation to the intercourse said to be carried on between the British trading posts and population on the Red river of the North and in that vicinity and our frontier settlements and the ntermediate Indian tribes. From the information obtained, I am convinced that ardent spirit has for several years past, been introduced into the country occupied by Indians south of our Northern boundary line, by subjects of the British government and by them disposed of to the Indians. The statement of Mr. Beaulieu herewith transmitted, proves the existence of the traffic in September last. Mr. Rice's letter, enclosed herewith, also contains important information on the subject. I have conversed with several gentlemen of intelligence who are acquainted with the community in the neighborhood of the Red river of the North, and some of them residents there; they all confirm the fact that ardent spirit is every year introduced among the Indians within our limits in that section of the country, by British subjects. With regard to the extent of this traffic, I have been unable to obtain definite and satisfactory information. From the nature of the trade it is very difficult, if not impossible to ascertain the amount of capital employed in it; the quantity of liquor sold or disposed of to the Indians. Men engaged in a traffic in violation of law do not exhibit a manifesto. I was informed last summer, by Mr. Norman W. Kittson, a licensed trader residing at Pembina, who has four trading posts on or near our northern boundary line, that the amount of ardent spirits then vended by British settlers to the Indians within our boundaries on that frontier, was not so great as formerly. I have recently had information that Mr. Kittson has written to a gentleman at St. Peters that the traders of the Hudson Bay Company have during a few months past been engaged somewhat extensively in introducing liquor among the Indians within our limits. (I requested to see Mr. Kittson's letter and was told that it had been forwarded to Mr. Sibley at Washington. I presume the Department had come in possession of the information contained in it.) The object which the British traders have in supplying the Indians with ardent spirits, is to break down the American traders. They annoy and discommode our traders by purchasing with whisky all the surplus provisions the Indians have to dispose of; but they injure our traders most by preventing them from obtaining furs. While the Indians can obtain liquor, they will not hunt, and having no money, nothing can be made out of trade with them.

From the most authentic information I can obtain on the subject, I conclude that about twenty thousand buffalo are killed annually within the country occupied by the Sioux and Chippewa Indians south of our northern

boundary, by half breeds from the British side of the line. Mr. Kittson estimates the population of Red river within the British territory at six thousand, and that one-third of this population subsist by hunting buffalo on the American side of the line. The destruction of the buffalo is a heavy tax on our Indians, particularly the Sioux. It is not strange that quarrels have occasionally arisen on account of this trespass; they would undoubtedly have been much more frequent but from the fact that the half breeds go on their buffalo hunts in parties sufficiently strong to protect themselves.

With reference to attempts made by British subjects to alienate and disaffect the Indians within our limits, towards our government, I am in possession of no information more definite than that contained in Mr. Rice's letter. Neither am I in possession of any facts that go to prove that the British government have, lately, done or sanctioned, directly, ought to excite or prejudice the Indians, within our borders, against our government. It may, perhaps, be just grounds for remonstrance against the British government, that its subjects are grossly violating our laws by introducing ardent spirits among our Indians, and by holding councils with these Indians for the purpose of prejudicing them against our government, and against the system of trade provided or sanctioned by our government for their benefit.

Your honor saw fit to instruct me to recommend to the department such measures as I might consider advisable to be adopted, to put a stop to evils arising from the existing state of affairs on our northern frontier. While I duly appreciate the honor of being consulted in reference to this important subject, I find difficulty in deciding how to discharge the duty assigned me. There are some evils which, owing to the circumstances attending them, seem not to justify the application of an adequate remedy. Presuming on the continuance of our present amicable relations with the British government, so long as the Indians on our northern frontier continue peaceably disposed toward us, the occasional violation of our trade and intercourse law among bands with whom we have no special treaty relations, and the protection of the small amount of licensed trade carried on by our citizens there, would not seem to warrant the heavy expenditure necessary to be incurred by our government in order to enforce, on that extreme frontier, a rigid observance of our laws regulating trade and intercourse with the Indian tribes; but a careful examination of the subject in all its bearings, leads to a different conclusion. It is considered the true policy of a government to provide against adverse contingencies, liable at any time to arise. The military force to which the protection of this frontier is assigned, is not sufficiently strong. In the event of a hostile movement on the part of the Indians, the citizens living on this frontier would be exposed to great danger and suffering; and in the event of a war with England, it is believed that the influence acquired and now held over a considerable portion of the Indians on our northern frontier, by the Hudson Bay Company, principally by means of a monopoly of trade with them, would enable the British Government to enlist these Indians as allies against us. It may be said that these events are not likely to happen; still the liability exists, and prudence dictates that it should be guarded against in time. The principal articles furnished in trade with our northern Indians, are of British manufacture: exemption from duty on these articles, gives the Hudson Bay Company a decided advantage over

our citizens engaged in trade with these Indians. A drawback on the duty paid by our citizens on goods for the Indian trade and taken north of a given line, would remedy the inequality now existing between our traders on the frontier and that company; but this remedy would be liable to abuse, and its adoption would, at best, be of doubtful expediency. Still it is important that our licensed traders among the Indian tribes on our northern frontier should be sustained, and especially important that they should be sustained among those tribes and bands with whom our government has no treaty relations. It would evidently be both just and sound policy, for our government to afford to its citizens who are engaged in this trade the protection they ask, namely, protection against British rum, and British smugglers.

In view of existing evils, and in view of still greater evils liable to arise on our northern frontier, I would respectfully submit to the Department, that in my opinion the most judicious measure that can be adopted to put a stop to these evils and preserve peace on said frontier, would be for our government to establish a military post at some suitable point in the neighborhood of the Red river of the North, and near our northern line, sufficiently strong to enforce obedience to our trade and intercourse laws, and to overawe the Indians and keep them under proper subjection to our government; and also to prevent the desolating wars which frequently are among the Indians themselves. In connection with this measure, I think the plan suggested by Mr. Rice, in his letter, for putting a stop to the trespass committed on the lands of the Sioux and Chippewa Indians by British subjects, is worthy of consideration. The country bordering on Red river is represented, by those who have traveled there, to be desirable, the soil good, and well adapted to agricultural purposes. In case our government should purchase of the Indians a portion of that country, and throw it open for settlement, it is believed that a majority of the half-breeds now living within the British limits would emigrate south of the line and place themselves under the protection and laws of the United States, and would form an efficient auxiliary for the protection of our frontier. Some of our citizens would emigrate there, and a military post could be supplied then with forage and provisions at a moderate expense. Said country, if purchased, would I suppose compose a part of Minnesota Territory, and would occasion but a trifling additional expense annually to our government.

"In reference to the extent to which the intercourse of the British settlers north of us with our citizens through the Indian country should be permitted, and the restrictions under and mode by which it should be carried on," I have to say that, so far as I have been able to ascertain, this intercourse through the Indian country with our citizens in this section, say at Crow Wing, St. Peters, St. Pauls and the commercial towns south of St. Pauls on the Mississippi, has not been carried on to any great extent; and that, in my opinion, this intercourse, if conducted in strict conformity with existing laws and regulations, in time of peace is not objectionable, and may safely be permitted. The permission granted to foreigners to travel in and through the Indian country, is liable to abuse, and has in some instances been abused in this section of the Indian country. A considerable quantity of whisky was, in the summer of 1847, taken from St. Pauls through the Indian country to Red river. A man by the name of Wells, I am informed, took through the Indian country that

season, some twenty barrels of this article. A proper vigilance on the part of the Indian Agent at St. Peters, and on the part of the officers at Fort Snelling, would have detected and punished this violation of law. It is believed that very little if any ardent spirit has been taken through the Indian country the past season. I have examined most of the loads of goods and provisions that have passed through the country to Red river. The position of the officers at Fort Snelling and Fort Marcy, and the position of the Indian Agent at this place, with the means of information always at command, will, with due diligence and the exercise of a sound discretion, always enable them to restrict the intercourse of British subjects and other foreigners, through this section of the Indian country, within proper limits. If a military post should be established near our northern boundary on Red river, the officer in command there would be able to prevent the introduction of contraband articles, and the ingress of improper persons from the north. I consider that the existing law contains all that is necessary in relation to the intercourse of foreigners through the Indian country. I have long been of the opinion that the protection of the Indians requires some additional restrictions relative to the privilege allowed our citizens to travel in and through the Indian country. My views on this subject were briefly submitted in my report of 6th of October, 1847.

The foregoing is the result of the limited investigation which I have hitherto been able to give this subject, and is respectfully submitted to the consideration of the Department.

I have the honor to be very respectfully, Sir, your obedient servant,

(Signed) J. E. FLETCHER, *Indian Agent.*

Hon. William Medill,
Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Washington, D. C.

I, the undersigned, of Crow-wing river, Upper Mississippi river, doth say, that in the summer of 1848 I was employed as Assistant Agent in the corps of the United States Geologist, exploring the valleys west of the Mississippi river, as far north to the boundary line. That on the fifth day of September last we landed at the S. W. end of Craine Lake Portage, on the American shore, being about 18 or 20 miles from the boundary line. Here I found a party of 5 men belonging to the Hudson Bay Company, peddling out liquor to the Indians in exchange for rice, and I saw four drunken Indians on the premises; I also furnished money to one of our men to buy liquor. After a long conversation with Francois Mainville, the clerk, he asked me to take a dram of good rum with him. I accepted the offer, and took a glass of good rum, and left him.

Saint Peters, January 11, 1849. (Signed) BAZIL H. BEAULIEU.

Bazil H. Beaulieu made oath before me to the truth of the above statement.—January 12, 1849.

(Signed) J. E. FLETCHER, *Indian Agent.*

Long Prairie, 30*th Nov.* 1848.

Sir: In answer to your inquiries of the 15th inst., I beg to state that the inhabitants residing north of the 49° pay no attention to the laws of our government. Last summer the agents of the Hudson's Bay Company at Rainy Lake, assembled the Indians residing on the American side (and

near the line) and made them presents; at the same time requested them to use their influence to prevent Americans from sending goods into the country. To this the Indians agreed, and a delegation of them visited my agent at Vermillion lake and requested him to inform me not again to send goods into their country. They were told by the agents of the Hudson's Bay Company that our government sent traders among them for the purpose of inducing them to sell their lands. I sent the Indians word that I should again send not only to Vermillion but to Rainy Lake, which promise I have kept, but should not be surprised if my post at the latter place should be destroyed. As soon as the agents of the H. B. Co. found that I was determined to prosecute the trade, they brought a large quantity of ardent spirits to their depot at Rainy lake, and at the time the Indians were gathering their last rice crop, they sent a quantity of liquor within our boundary and gave to our Indians in exchange for rice. I have positive proof of this. It is impossible to take provisions to those posts, and the traders and their employees are compelled to live on wild rice and fish; the rice they purchase from the Indians. The object of the company was to secure all of the surplus rice so that my men would be compelled to abandon the country. They well know that they can, with the advantage of whisky, break down any opposition. At the above mentioned posts the trade to them is not very valuable, but their object is to prevent our citizens from Americanizing the natives, and also to keep them out of the country that they may monopolize the trade; for when they are opposed on the line, goods are sold low, and high prices paid for furs, the news of which spreads far into the interior and dissatisfies their Indians north for hundreds of miles. Again, they do not wish their Indians to become acquainted with the manner in which our government deals with its Indians, for the illiberal policy pursued by the British government (or the H. B. Co.) when compared with the liberal policy pursued by our government, and made known to those north of the line, cannot but dissatisfy them and incline them to look forward to the day when they will come under our protection. The British traders have and still do make presents to our Indians, but were it not for the high duties we have to pay on all of our imported goods, we could carry on a successful trade on the line, and not an Indian in the vicinity but would be ashamed to be seen with a British flag or a British medal.

On Red river of the North, the half-breeds are very numerous; some four thousand men have adopted the civilized mode of living in part, many have been partially educated, and a few have been fully educated. They have good farms and raise large quantities of cattle, sheep and swine. The annual productions of the country, cattle, horses, sheep, swine, wheat, flax, oats, corn, potatoes, &c., &c., I have taken great pains to ascertain, and from a Catholic priest living there and other intelligent persons, I have obtained correct information of the quantity of each of the above articles, and the amount of the value of each as paid by the Hudson's Bay Co. and the Quarter-master and Commissary at Fort Gary. Some of their cattle they take to Fort Snelling to sell. There is also a large number of Scotch, English and Canadian farmers in what is called Lord Selkirk's settlement. The half-breeds (nearly all) cross the line twice a year for the purpose of hunting buffalo. Last spring a party with twelve hundred carts went in a body south of Devil's lake. The buffalo they destroyed by the thousands, not for the hides, but for the meat, tallow and tongues.

The meat they dry and pound up fine and enclose it in a skin sack and then pour the melted tallow upon it, which will keep for years in this way and is the means of enabling them to put a great quantity of nutriment in a small space. When so prepared it is taken to the Hudson's Bay depot and there disposed of to supply their northern posts. Last summer the half-breeds brought a large quantity to St. Peters and also to the mouth of the Crow Wing river; I purchased several thousand pounds. The Sioux Indians with justice complain of the encroachment of the half-breeds upon their lands and of their destroying and driving out of the country the only animal they have to subsist upon; in fact it has led to several outbreaks and will soon unless checked lead to serious trouble. The half-breeds assert that they cannot live without hunting the buffalo; for the Hudson's Bay Co. do not pay them half price for their produce. They say that, unless permitted to cross the line and become American citizens and have an American market for their produce and enjoy the benefits of American citizens, that they will be compelled to encroach upon the rights of our Indians; and the only way that it can be stopped, in my opinion, is, for our government to purchase a country on the Red river, south of the line, and permit said half-breeds and others to remove to it, and have the benefit of a southern market. If this could be done, and should difficulty arise between the British and American governments, a force would ever be found ready and sufficiently strong to carry the stars and stripes to York factory and supplant the cross of St. George between the 49° and Hudson's Bay.

As it is, by compulsion they are British subjects, and our government reaps no benefit from them, but, on the contrary, is and will be much annoyed so long as matters remain as they are. Any further information that I can furnish I will do with pleasure.

Very respectfully, your obed't serv't,

(Signed) HENRY M. RICE.

Gen'l J. E. Fletcher,

U. S. Indian Agent.

Fort Snelling, Min. T., *Nov.* 10*th*, 1849.

Sir: In compliance with instructions received from the Adjutant-General's office, dated "Washington, April 18, 1849," and of which a copy is enclosed, I have the honor to submit the following, as the result of my examination in the country of the Red river of the North, confining myself as much as possible to the objects contemplated by my instructions.

The country referred to is not unknown nor unexplored, but has been examined scientifically and geographically by some of the most distinguished gentlemen of the age, and reported upon. The late venerable and world-renowned Mr. Nicollet, by a reference to his map and report it will be seen, has extended his explorations from the Missouri river to the Shayenne river and up to "Devil's lake," near the 49th parallel, and returned by following down the ridge that bounds on the west the valley of the Red river, and not many miles west of the trail we followed in our expedition last summer.

His practised eye and zealous devotion to science and geography enabled him to present to the world the prominent features and resources of that country.

Dr. Owen, the distinguished geologist, in the service of the U. States,

has made an examination of the "Red river of the North," from the 49th parallel to its sources; many others of distinction have also lent their aid in furnishing materials for a full knowledge of that country, so that it now stands presentable, by maps, to a very great degree of accuracy.

The route we followed is well known and travelled every summer by large "trains" of carts from the Red river settlements. In selecting it in preference to the route by "Crow-wing river," I was governed by advice that too forcibly impressed itself on my mind to be neglected, and I deem myself fortunate in the information I received before starting and the excellence of my guide.

The expedition commenced its march from this post on the 6th June, the earliest period we thought the grass sufficient for the subsistence of our horses. It consisted of myself, in command, Dr. Sykes, Act'g Ass't Surgeon, 2nd Lieut. A. D. Nelson, 6th Infantry, Qr. Mr. and Com'y, and 2nd Lieut. and Bvt. Capt. John Pope, Top. Engs. Lieut. Nelson had under his charge a mountain howitzer and the train by which our supplies were being transported. Lieut. Gardiner, with Company "D." 1st Dragoons, was to meet me at Sunk rapids.

Our starting was unpropitious; the rains, commencing on the 4th, continued unintermittingly until our arrival at Sunk rapids on the 11th. The roads were very bad and our teams had much difficulty in reaching that point, and my observation in that short distance taught me that I was not properly outfitted for the expedition. The large, heavy wagons were not suitable for the roads or country, and I directed the Quarter-master, if possible, to hire or buy light two-horse wagons, and send back the heavy ones. He succeeded in getting four, and we sent back two heavy wagons.

The Dragoon Company, numbering 40, non-commissioned officers, privates, &c., under 1st. Lieut. J. W. T. Gardiner, and 2nd Lieut. T. F. Castor, 1st Dragoons, arrived at Sunk Rapids on the 10th. On the 12th, we commenced crossing the Mississippi and in consequence of the continued rains and high winds, we did not effect our passage until the 13th.

On the west bank of the Mississippi I made an encampment, where I intended to remain until the weather changed for the better. The rains having fallen so steadily and for so many days, the earth was so saturated with water, that the thickly-matted turf of the prairie would not support the weight of the wagons. Our horses would have been pulling and breaking themselves down without making much progress on our journey.

The weather clearing up on the afternoon of the 13th, and the 14th and 15th being clear, pretty days, we resumed our march on the 16th, with but trifling interruptions by bad roads, for 16½ miles, when we encamped. Our route was on the "Red river trail," nearly south-west, and with the exception of about 2 miles, open prairie with heavy bodies of timber close by on either hand. Our encampment was on a little stream called "Cold-water creek," formed by little springs breaking out from its banks. The water as clear and cold as the most thirsty could wish. This stream we had to bridge or causeway on both sides for twenty or thirty yards. The "trains" from Red river cross such places by throwing down grass or brush and the ox and cart pass where horses and wagons cannot.

There are numberless places on this route called "Terres-tremblantes," and are formed by springs, the water running from them over a bed of sand, on which a vegetable mould has been deposited until in some places it is found three or more feet deep.

The water running underneath keeps the superincumbent mass moist and unstable, so much so that it can be sometimes shaken for ten or fifteen feet around, and is always miry.

From this point we continued our route considerably south of west, and close upon the bank of Sunk river for about five miles, where the Sunk river turns abruptly north, and we had to cross it. The river was much swollen by the heavy rains, and was wide and deep. We launched our ponton-wagon-beds and crossed it, and encamped on the western bank. Between this and Cold-water creek we had to make two bridges, and mired down over the most of the way, going only five miles in two days; many little places detaining us for hours, and requiring almost the constant labor of our men in mud and water. In crossing Sunk river, some twenty of our horses and mules got away and took the road back. On this account, and to give our men and horses some rest from their toils, I concluded to remain in camp a day. On the 19th a party returned for our mules and horses, and near the Mississippi met a man bringing them back.

The country back from this point to the Mississippi is heavily timbered, with patches of prairie. The road carries us out of the direction, following the prairie which skirts along Sunk river. The land is good, plenty of timber and the best of water, and destined to be the most valuable portion of this territory; some positions are beautiful, and nearly all good for farming purposes.

On the 20th resuming our march over a beautiful prairie, did not go far until another "tremblante" caused us several hours' labor, and again and again until night overtook us on the prairie, and we had to camp in the rain, without wood, and marshes all around us. In the morning we lightened our loads and passed the slash in our front, sent back after our stores and again moved forward, and with much difficulty reached "Lake David" near sun-set, going on this day only 3½ miles, and the day before 8½.

The hard pulling of horses and mules had much exhausted them, and broken our chains, &c., so much as to require repairs. We formed a camp on David lake, and had to burn coal to make the repairs necessary. We remained at this point four days, hoping the prairie might improve.

When starting, we had difficulty in supplying ourselves with picket ropes or laniats for our horses, and were obliged to take the common bed-cords. Seeing that we would soon be without the means of securing our horses, as these cords broke easily, I sent Lieutenant Castor and two men back for a new supply. Our difficulties to this point were principally with the two heavy wagons belonging to the dragoon company, and I would have sent them back and waited for others, could I possibly have gotten along without them; they were the ponton-wagons, and were indispensably necessary to the march, and did us much good service on the expedition although they caused the men much hard labor. The light two-horse wagon is the most suitable vehicle for transportation in this country, and the one generally in use. The cart is much used by the Red river people, but for its economy. It is a simple structure, without any iron about it, and can be made or repaired by each individual. A single ox in harness is the moving power, and one person will drive four of them.

Lake David is narrow and long; its length in the direction of north and south, and drains off into a branch of "Crow river." It is about 12 miles from the crossing of Sunk river. The horse-fly attacked our horses here, and continued for two days indescribably fierce, and then disappeared; we were not again troubled with them during the expedition.

On the 26th we commenced again our march, over bad roads, or rather, over a bad prairie, which, although it is undulating and high, has many drains and level places that were flooded with water and miry. Seven or eight miles from Lake David, is "Lake Henrie", resembling much the former, and of about the same extent. They both have heavy strips of timber on their eastern shores. The water is clear and good, and is supplied by springs. I am told there is plenty of fish in them. The roads continuing very bad for about eight miles further, causing us much labor, annoyance, and delay, we crossed a branch of "Crow river." This is a bold little stream running about south-east, with a muddy bottom on the west side of about two hundred yards, which was very difficult to pass. From this point for eleven miles we had good roads, to "Lightning lake." This much good road was obtained by following a ridge that divides two branches of "Crow river."

The prairie was still almost impassable; at Lightning lake we arrived in the midst of a heavy rain, and pitched our tents on the borders of a beautiful lake and sought the shelter of them during the continuation of the rain and the most terrible electric explosions. The dragoon company was still behind with the heavy wagons, but Lieutenant Gardiner's servant being with the advance, had pitched his tent. A flash of lightning struck Lieutenant Gardiner's tent, shivering the tent poles into splinters, and burnt his bedding and clothing as if a red-hot iron had passed over them. My tent was eight or ten paces from Lieutenant Gardiner's, and Captain Pope, Mr. Stille and myself were seated in it, and were knocked from our seats; but recovering from the shock, we rose and looked out, fearing some person had been hurt, when we saw Lieutenant Nelson, whose tent was between Lieutenant Gardiner's and mine, lying on his back, out of his tent, in the rain, his hands and arms raised convulsively, gasping and struggling for breath and in the last agonies of apoplexy, produced by concussion of the brain.

Dr. Sykes was called in an instant, and by a free use of cold water re-action was excited, his pulse revived and he gave signs of life. As soon as he was able to bear it he was bled, and then soon recovered his senses, to find his right side partially paralyzed; but in the hands of our attentive and skillful surgeon, a few weeks relieved him from that misfortune. Nothing but the presence of mind and promptness of the doctor, could possibly have resuscitated him. Life seemed to be wholly extinct when the doctor reached him. Every person in camp was more or less affected by the shock. The iron on the tent-pole, particularly as a *point* extends above the tent, attracts electricity as a lightning-rod.

On account of Lieutenant Nelson's health, and the bad condition of the prairies, I remained in camp five days. On the 3d of July we again moved forward and went fourteen miles, and encamped on the borders of "White-Bear lake," where we remained waiting for Lieutenant Castor, who joined us on the 4th with our expected supplies.

White-Bear lake has an average width of about two miles, and is perhaps eight or ten in length, nearly east and west. In its widest places, near the shore, are many little islands all heavily timbered.

This lake is about *seventy-five miles* from Sunk rapids (mouth of Asakis river on the maps), and is a beautiful sheet of water, with heavy bodies of timber around it, alternating with prairie, which in many places descends in handsome slopes to the water's edge. The lake is fed by springs, and is full of fish.

The heavily-timbered highlands, that range parallel with the Mississippi, and back some distance from it, edge upon this lake. The prairie is of the best quality, being a rich mixture of vegetable mould with sand, making a warm productive soil.

On the north of the lake the prairie is broken and irregular, but the east, west, and south borders, lie handsomely for cultivation.

Back to Lightning lake (a name given by us, on account of the accident that occurred there), the country is very pretty, mostly prairie, but probably with a sufficient quantity of woodland within reach on the north and east.

The immediate vicinity of Lightning lake is a beautiful country for farming. The lake is divided into two parts by a sand-bank of not more than fifty yards in width. The western portion is almost circular and about half a mile in diameter. The eastern division is from a half to a mile in width, and four or five in length, and drains off into Crow river. Heavy bodies of timber lie all around this lake, with the exception of the west side, where beautiful prairie spreads out in the distance. The soil is good as could be wished, and some of the most beautiful natural meadows that can be seen in any country. The lakes, as all lakes of any extent in this country, are fed by springs, and have clear pure water, with sandy bottoms. Our men caught immense quantities of fish, principally bass and perch of large size.

By the use of a small seine we obtained a greater supply than the whole command could consume. Having observed that near these lakes immense quantities of rushes sprang up most luxuriantly, I was led to suppose that springs could be easily reached, and digging about five feet through a rich mould we reached pure sand and a vein of spring water, as clear and cold as ice.

We arrived at White-Bear lake on the 3d and left it on the 6th of July, and in the thirty days that intervened since leaving Fort Snelling, we had, from the 6th to the 13th both inclusive *eight* days steady rain, from the 14th to the 19th both included *six* days clear, and then *two* days rain, *four* clear, *two* rain, *five* clear, *two* rain, *one* clear, *fourteen* days rain, and *sixteen* clear. On the days marked rainy, we had sometimes the most terrific storms, when the rain fell in torrents and the heavens were in a blaze of light, and the thunder broke over us appallingly. We were driven from the vicinity of the timber by the mosquitoes, and our camps on the open prairie, with the quantities of iron about our wagons, makes them the most prominent object around; and when clouds heavily charged with electricity pass near, such camps are in great danger.

On the night of the 4th July one of these storms visited us, while at White-Bear lake, with all the fury the utmost power of the combined elements can inflict. Being on the high open prairie, the thunder broke over us in such *smashing* explosions, that for two hours our position was torturing beyond description, many left their tents and stood out regardless of the pelting rain, nor was this an idle or unreasonable apprehension, for we had only a few days before the thunder-bolt amongst us in its dire effects, and we knew our camp was the most probable object if there was another stray one at leisure.

We resumed our march on the 6th of July, but found the prairies so bad from the drenching rains that had just fallen, we were scarcely able to get along. Little drains that usually contain no water, were now almost

swimming, and these occurring every mile or two, with the miry condition of the ground, rendered our march slow and exhausting to our teams. We made about fourteen miles and camped on what we called *Pike lake*, a very pretty lake, where the men caught with their seine a great many *pike*. We saw here as at White-Bear lake a great many swan; one was killed here that weighed 24 pounds. It being the moulting season, they were at our mercy. We remained in camp two days on account of the high waters and bad condition of the prairie.

I had expected to turn off more to the north for the purpose of striking Red river, near Otter-Tail lake, but finding the difficulties on the best route almost more than we could successfully encounter I feared to attempt a route which I learned was worse.

On the 9th we again took up the line of march, and after going about twelve miles over a prairie that was a succession of ups and downs we crossed the main branch of the Chippewa river. It runs almost north and south, is about fifteen yards across, has a rapid current with a rocky bottom, and empties into the St. Peters river five or six miles below "Lac-qui-porte." The highlands just passed over are those dividing the waters of the Mississippi and St. Peter's rivers. After crossing the Chippewa river, in a few hundred yards we came upon the foot of a lake along which we continued for two or three miles and got into the midst of many lakes separated from each other by embankments but they all have outlets, and drain off their waters into the Chippewa river. Here we saw an elk, and being the first one that crossed our path, we called this lake *Elk lake*. It has high and in some places bluff banks, with fine bodies of timber around it and much more covering the highlands off to the east. About fifteen miles farther on, we came upon another large lake, which we called *Elbow lake*. A name suggested by its shape. This also has timber around its shores. The roads had much improved and we got along with fewer interruptions on these highlands.

At "Elbow lake," we met a "war party" of Chippewa Indians, known by the name of "Pillagers" from "Otter-tail lake," but I shall forbear speaking of them here as I have done of other Indians we had met with. My object being in the first place, to give a description of our march, and the country passed over, and then under separate heads, I shall attempt to present an account of Indians, half-breeds, and a military reconnoissance of the country.

About ten miles back we crossed a branch of the Tipsinah, or Pomme-de-terre River. It runs nearly south, and empties into the St. Peters five or six miles above "Lac-qui-porte," or "Echo lake."

After leaving "Elbow lake," and going four or five miles to a little stream called "Rabbit river," we met the advance of the Red river "train of carts," about twenty-five in number, and under the charge of a man from Selkirk, or the English settlement. They were loaded with peltries and "pemmican," and on their way to St. Pauls, Minnesota Territory. These people buy goods at St. Pauls and Galena and take them back to Pembina, when they await an opportunity and smuggle them into the settlements on the English side.

About ten miles farther on, we met Mr. Norman Kittson, the agent of the fur company of "Chotian June & Co.," established at Pembina. He had about *sixty-five* carts, loaded with the product of his last winter's business in furs: going ten miles farther, we came upon Otter-Tail lake

river (as it is called in this country), or Red river of the maps, where it has a direction a little south of west. It runs through the open prairie, with no timber to be seen in any direction, save some small scattering shrubbery growing immediately on its banks. At the ford, it has a rocky bottom and good banks, is from *two* to *three* feet deep and some fifty yards wide; we forded it easily and camped on the right bank. Mr. Kittson returned to our camp and remained with us for the night and gave us much information of the country we were en route for.

From our first crossing of Red river, we travelled nearly north-west, about twenty-two miles, and struck Red river again, ten or fifteen miles below the mouth of "Bois-de-Sioux river," where it is a much larger and finer stream. After crossing it by pretty deep fording, we followed it down about four miles and made our camp, with the view of examining this point for the establishment of a military post.

My instructions were to select a *site* for a military post on the Red river of the North, and at a distance from "Fort Gaines" not to exceed 200 miles. This position is 163 miles from Sunk rapids (mouth of Osakis river) and nearly due west from Fort Gaines, and perhaps farther from the latter place than the former by any practicable route. The position of our camp, and which I selected for that of a post, is on the left bank of Red river, where it runs a little west of north.

The prairie comes up to the water's edge, and extends as far as the eye can reach north, west, and south, with the exception of heavy strips of timber, with openings showing the prairie beyond, along Wild Rice river, which is about *three* miles to the west, running north. Red river makes a bend in our front, forming almost an island on the right bank, this heavily timbered, and the bends to the right and left of us on the left bank are well timbered. I have carefully examined, with reference to the wants of a military post, and thinkt here is a sufficiency of timber within five miles for all the purposes it might be wished for any number of years. The forest consists chiefly of elm, oak, ash, haskberry, cotton wood, and some maple, and a variety of small growth I am not familiar with. The oak and ash are of dimensions to be made good lumber. It is to be regretted that there is no stone in the country of any description. I have seen no stratified rock since I left the Mississippi river. There is an admirable clay for brick, and sand can be had by digging for it, but lime, I presume, cannot be had short of the Mississippi.

The prairie is very fertile, and if there is any objection to it, it is that there is not a sufficiency of sand to give it warmth. The grass is very luxuriant, and will be inexhaustible for hay. The water is the river water. The acting Assistant-Surgeon reports it a healthful position.

This was the first position, or the one highest up on the Red river, where there was timber sufficient for a military post. I would have preferred locating it higher up, for reasons that will be given when I come to speak of Indian relations on this frontier.

This point is 88 miles from White-bear lake, and there is but little timber on our route over that distance. Some about Pike lake, Elk lake, and Elbow lake. The prairie generally is high and undulating, and dotted over with lakes of various dimensions, and there are some running streams.

The immediate vicinity of Red river from our first point of crossing to this place is low, and in wet weather, marshy. Here the banks are about

25 feet high, and out of all danger from high waters, and the prairie dry, even in the wet season. It is the prettiest location in the country; but this is not high commendation. We set up on this *site* a post about two feet in diameter, and eight feet above the ground, hewn square, and cut on it in deep letters, "163 *miles to Sunk Rapids. July* 14, 1849."

On the 15th of July we resumed our march in a direction generally north-west, and travelled nine miles over a high dry prarie to Wild Rice river, which has a bad muddy crossing, and then eleven miles over a low marshy prairie, and, consequently, bad roads, we struck the Shayenne river. This river was much swollen, and had to be ferried. A raft that Mr. Kittson had constructed for his passage, we thought would answer for ours, with some repairs. We hoped to be able to put the wagon with its load on it and save the trouble of unloading; but the raft was badly constructed, and would carry but little, and gave us more trouble than we should have had, if we had commenced with our wagon-beds.

The Shayenne is a rapid turbid stream, and was at that time deep, with excellent bodies of timber along its banks. While encamped on this river, early in the morning, our horses being picketed out and made restive by the mosquitoes, took fright at something, broke their larriats, and twenty-six of them left the camp at full run. A party was immediately sent after them, and followed for ten miles, when they caught six of them. They lost all trace of the others, and came in without them. Another party started, and returned the next day about twelve o'clock, bringing back all but one, which we never recovered.

Having consumed the 16th in crossing the river, we camped on the north bank of the Shayenne where, during the night, the mosquitoes infested our camp in clouds. Our horses were tortured, and got neither rest nor opportunity to eat during the night.

Soon after crossing the Mississippi, the mosquitoes commenced on us, and had gradually increased in numbers and ferocity, and had been anathematized, as we thought, sufficiently for their perdition; but now they choked down every expression that would consign them to the shades.

It was impossible to talk without inhaling them.

Starting at 12 M., over a level prairie on which the water stood from *two* inches to *two* feet almost the entire way, and after going about fourteen miles, we reached Maple river, which Mr. Kittson had bridged; but the water being much higher now than when he crossed it, the bridge had disappeared. We camped on its bank in the midst of a terrible thunder-storm, and were honored, as the night before, by countless numbers of these winged insects that contemn the displeasure, and sing cheerily over the tortures of their victims. We ferried the river, and over the marshes again for about fifteen miles. We came upon Rush river (Elm river of the maps), where we encamped. Between this point and Maple river, fifteen miles back, we had to ferry two branches, and crossed a third that nearly swam us.

There had been such torrents of rain about this time, that the little branches that ordinarily furnish barely a sufficiency of water to allay the thirst of a travelling train, were now swimming. Our team horses at this point began to fail, attributable principally to the unceasing annoyance of mosquitoes that did not allow them to get their rest at night, nor quietly to feed upon the grass. At Rush river we found higher prairie, and a little relief from the mosquitoes. We had to ferry the river. As our direc-

tion diverged from the course of Red river, we were at this point probably fifteen or twenty miles distant from it, and seeing the high prairie before us, we began to congratulate ourselves at the prospect of getting out of its bottoms; but we found the elevation that appeared in our front only benches, rising fifteen or twenty feet, and then spreading out into what are called "dead levels," covered with marshes.

About eight miles from Rush river, we came upon a little prairie stream much swollen and deep. We diverged from our track and passed around it, or so nearly so, that we had only some of its branches to cross, which were fordable. On leaving Rush river, we were aware that we had more than forty miles before us of prairie, without a stick of timber, and carried wood with us for one night's encampment.

About twenty miles from Rush river, we came upon a cluster of hills of considerable elevation, and after ascending them, we could see off to the west and south west their continuation; but in our direction, west of north they extended but a few miles, and a flat country was still before us, Twenty miles farther, we struck the south branch of Goose river. The banks of this river are seventy-five or more feet in height, and in some places perpendicular. The view from camp is a very handsome one; the high bluff banks bearing off in the distance, and the bottom dotted with clumps of trees, make a beautiful contrast with the boundless extent of prairie spreading around us in every other direction. On the morning after our arrival here, we saw a herd of buffalo, gave them chase, and killed several of them.

I will send with this report, an account of buffalo-hunting on these immense prairies, written by the Rev. Mr. Belcourt, Catholic Missionary at Pembina.

About nineteen miles farther we crossed the main branch of Goose River, travelling over higher and drier prairie; we also crossed several little branches with abrupt high banks. These abrupt breaks on the streams are confined to the banks; the prairie extending out from them, as if it had been adjusted in its horizontal by a spirit-level. Going twenty miles farther we struck Turtle river, and encamped on its northern bank. It is a small stream, running south of east, with high banks and some timber in its bottoms.

Our encampment was a short distance below a place which bears some resemblance to a rude attempt at a field-work, and it is said to be a place made for defence by the Red river Chippewa's when they went there to winter, as was the case some years ago. This work is of rectangular form, three sides of it having much the appearance of made embankments, the side facing the river having none. The enclosure is about one acre in extent, and the portion of it at the lower end is sunk ten or more feet below the surrounding country. The elevations forming the contour are of sand, while the adjacent and exterior ground is a vegetable mould. The whole is now covered with vegetation, but of not so luxuriant a growth as that surrounding it. Had I not heard stories about it I should have passed it by, thinking it the uncommon and curious washings of a bluff bank by the heavy rains.

Two or three years ago, parties of the Sioux and Chippewas met here. The Sioux had come from the west, down the river, and encamped the night preceding in a little wood about half-a-mile above. The Chippewa had discovered them, and selected this old Fort for an ambuscade, an

ook possession of it in the night and remained undiscovered until the Sioux were within their reach, when a skirmish ensued, and ended by the Chippewas abandoning their work and taking to flight. The Sioux were about two to one, and both parties together did not number over *fifty*. Five or six were killed.

From this point on we traveled over high, broken prairie, the roads good, crossing Big and Little Salt rivers until the bottoms spread out again before us, about forty miles from Turtle river. We camped on a high ridge on the prairie; we were fearful of going into the bottoms, on account of the mosquitoes. These pests had become so much worse than they were, when we allowed them to irritate and anger us, that complaints and displeasure changed into merry-making and the ridiculous. The latter impression could not be resisted when you saw your fellows in misfortune industriously striking out with both hands from morning till night, and scarcely able to talk for fear of ingulfing some handful or two of them. The sufferings of our horses were painful to behold, and irremediable. We made divers smokes about them, which sometimes availed, but at other times did no good. On this night, although we were on a high ridge and a strong wind was blowing, the mosquitoes were so thick, that being driven against our tents it sounded like the pattering of rain.

We were at this point within fifty miles of Pembina, and our direction beginning to change to the north-east, we had to descend from the hills, and crossed several little streams all with heavy bodies of timber on their banks. The roads were very bad.

About twenty-five miles from Pembina we got among what are called the "Poplar Islands." These are patches of poplar bushes, over a wet miry soil, and from this point to Pembina it is one big slash. When we were within ten miles of our destination, I almost despaired of ever getting there. Our horses were almost exhausted. The constant hard pulling, the ravages of mosquitoes, and not being able to feed in quiet, were too much for them.

I sent Lieutenant Nelson, the quarter-master, forward, to get some carts if possible. They were obtained, and returned to our assistance; and on the 1st day of August, 1849,—having been out since the 6th of June,—we arrived at Pembina, and found the Red river and the Pembina river with about *twenty* feet rise in them, and overflowing their banks.

The trading establishment of Mr. Kittson is in the fork of Red and Pembina rivers, and north of the Pembina. We left our wagons on the south bank of Pembina river, swam our horses over it, and took our stores, &c., over in canoes.

It was with difficulty that we could find dry ground sufficient for the company to pitch their tents. The marshes afforded good grass for our horses.

Mr. Kittson, when we met him, had kindly tendered us the use of his houses; and Mr. Rolette, the gentleman left in charge of his business, politely afforded every assistance in his power. It was matter of congratulation with us all to reach this point; and I have no doubt the horses would have participated in the general joy, could they have articulated an expression of their feelings.

Pembina (as the country about the mouth of the Pembina river is called,) is a low, flat and marshy country, with large quantities of timber along Red, Pembina, and Tongue rivers. Red river at this point, at its ordinary stage, is

about *one hundred and twenty yards wide*, and *sixteen* feet deep, with banks from *fifteen* to *twenty* feet in height. I expected to find at this place a collection of huts, with the appearance of a village; but Mr. Kittson's trading establishment stands alone. Mr. Belcourt, the Catholic missionary, lives about one mile lower down on the Red river, and has erected a two-story house (intended for a Chippewa school), a chapel, and some out-houses.

There were many Indian lodges near, occupied by Indians and half-breeds. The latter generally have houses; but they build in the timber along the rivers, for protection from the cold winds of winter and the convenience of wood. They had been driven from them by the overflow of the river.

It was my intention to examine the country east and west of Red river for twenty-five or thirty miles, and I waited from the 1st to the 26th of August, hoping the country would dry sufficiently for me to pass over it, but was disappointed. The improvement of the prairie by a few successive clear days, a hard rain would restore to their previous impassible condition. Knowing that it would take me ten or fifteen days to pass over the country as I wished, and despairing of any improvement in the prairie, on the 14th of August I started with a party for Pembina mountains, about thirty miles west. I traveled nearly due west for about eight miles, and found the prairie so horribly bad that I turned back. I had a guide who has lived in this country *thirty-four years*, and he selected the route I took as the best one, and said, after seeing the condition of this route, it would be useless to attempt any other. Our horses mired over nearly the whole of the distance. The country east of the Red river is, much of it, woodland; and I was told by every one that there was not a probability that I could travel over it on horseback, so I had reluctantly to abandon my intention.

The people say that the last summer was an extraordinary one, but tell me the floods are sometimes worse than I saw them. About twenty years ago the waters were some ten or fifteen feet higher than this last summer, when, with the exception of the position that Mr. Belcourt's establishment occupies, there was not a single point not covered with water. I saw evidences of overflows, in drift wood, out on the prairies.

I visited the line, marking the 49th parallel. The post set up by Major Long had rotted away, but the place is still preserved by a stake that is firmly driven in the ground. I placed a post there and merely marked on it "*August* 14, 1849." There is a small house belonging to a half-breed, built on the English side, within a few feet of the line. The English Fur Company's trading post is about *two hundred* yards from the line on their territory, consisting of a small "shanty," but they now have under erection very extensive buildings. The post marking the line is thought not to be accurately on the 49th parallel, but some two or three hundred yards within our territory. This impression arises from statements said to have been made by Major Long, as well as English observers, and the cautiousness they exhibit in settling near the marked line. I did not attempt to confirm or correct the position of the post placed by Major Long, for fear of leading to greater errors. But Capt. Pope got himself into a correspondence with the chief factor of the Hudson's Bay Company in relation to the boundary line. I forbid him as an officer of the expedition corresponding on that subject with any official from the other side of the line.

Soon after arriving at Pembina, I directed the Qr. Master, Lieut. Nelson, to procure for our horses forage, if possible; our work horses par-

ticularly stood in need of it, they had become weak under their hardships. There being no grain in the country, he had to send to Fort Garey, the English settlement, sixty miles below, to obtain such supplies as he wanted, which on account of the difficulties in bringing them up the river, we did not get until the 15th August.

The officers at Fort Garey, the gentlemen of the Fur Company, and the colonists tendered us cordial invitations to visit them, and afforded us every facility in replenishing our decreasing supplies.

The almost incessant rains and the condition of the country prevented us from responding to this politeness, and we can now only offer them our grateful recollection of their kindness, with the hope that we may in our own country sometime have an opportunity of reciprocating their attentions.

The soil at Pembina is a vegetable mould of a foot or two in depth, on a substratum of clay, and is very productive in the indigenous growth of the climate. The prairies are covered with a most luxurious growth of grass, and the woodlands with a rank dense thicket of undergrowth and weeds. Agricultural pursuits are rewarded by a bountiful harvest, and there is hardly a product that the farmer values that cannot be raised there in abundance. I saw at Mr. Kittson's a field of barley and potatoes, and at Mr. Belcourt's a garden, in which were growing all the vegetables most prized by the horticulturist, all of luxuriant growth. The Indian corn I saw seemed of a stunted growth, it being in tassel, and the stalk not more than *two feet* high. I was told this was a peculiar kind of corn that did not grow higher anywhere. There is no farming on our side of the line.

The half-breeds have small gardens about their huts, but the overflow last summer drowned out or injured vegetable life in them.

In the vicinity of Fort Garey, the English military post below, I am told there are fine farms. I saw several of these farmers and had much conversation with them. They gave me the following as the average of their crops:

Wheat,	30 to	40 bushels to the acre.		
Barley,	40 "	50	"	"
Oats,	40 "	50	"	"
Potatoes,	200 "	300	"	"

Corn does not do well, but can be raised in small quantities; wheat is sown in the spring and gathered in the fall. They have tried the fall-wheat and think it will do well, but the former being that generally used in the country, it is difficult to introduce a different practice. It is one of the peculiarities of these people to discountenance every thing like *change of habits*, although it may come recommended by improvement.

The country *east of Red river* is a mixture of prairie and woodland, intersected by numerous streams. Its general character, according to the best accounts, is, that it is a good soil, well-timbered, and having plenty of water, but in a wet season, for a time, it is impossible to travel over it or to occupy it, from the marshy nature of the soil.

The same remarks apply to the country *east* of Red river, through to the Mississippi, and along our line to Rainy lake and Lake Superior, even the few highlands marked there come under the same category.

The country *west* of Red river is a level marshy region back about thirty miles to Pembina mountain, which rises into a high peak near the 49th parallel and ranges off nearly south, forming the western border of the valley of Red river, and connects with the highlands extending out from Lake Travers, near the head waters of the St. Peter's river.

We left Pembina on the afternoon of the 26th of August on our return and had for about fifteen miles the same difficulties to contend with that we encountered going out, but at this point the prairie began to improve. There had evidently not been so much rain as at Pembina, and twenty-five or thirty miles farther on the roads became good and we travelled without any serious interruptions, averaging more than *twenty* miles a day until we reached Fort Snelling, the 18th of September, 1849, making the distance from Pembina to Fort Snelling, measured coming down, 471 miles in 23½ days. We were fifty-seven days going up.

On the morning of the 1st of September we found a heavy frost on the ground, and this with numerous others began to affect the grass. Our horses having to labor and travel all day became very weak by the time we reached the Mississippi, on the 14th of September, but getting forage at Sunk Rapids, on the Mississippi, our horses went through to Fort Snelling with ease.

We were three months and twelve days out, travelled nearly a thousand miles without forage (with the exception of a few days), had the worst of roads, rivers to swim almost daily, and the unceasing annoyance of mosquitoes, and lost but one horse and one mule. The horse got away and could not be recovered; the mule died. On returning, we crossed the Shayenne river, higher up than our crossing going, where it emerges from the highlands. The crossing is much better. It has a sandy bottom, and is not deep. From these hills it is plainly perceptible they are a part of the range seen in the west on our route back to Pembina.

I had prepared at Pembina a cart, knowing a wagon could not pass on that route, for the purpose of crossing Red river, near the mouth of the Shayenne, and going by the head of the Otter-tail lake to Crow-wing and Fort Gaines, but was prevented by an accident. My desire to go on that route arose solely from the wish to report upon it from personal observation, not doubting but that I would find it, just as it had been reported to me, "impracticable for wagons." My inability to go was not so much a subject of regret, as I am confident that the best route is the one we took.

The accident referred to was an injury I received in my foot, while chasing buffalo on the 30th of August, which confined me to the wagon and crutches for five or six days, and from which I have not yet entirely reccovered.

In the foregoing I have endeavored to condense as much as possible from my journal a description of the country and march, and fear that I have been diffuse without accomplishing my object in a satisfactory manner. I will close this portion of my report by the following extracts from my journal, made on reaching the Mississippi river.

September 14th.—Marched 21¼ miles, and camped on the Mississippi river. Here our troubles end, and right glad we were, too, once more to see this magnificent river. We have been wading, swimming, and plunging through dirty little streams dignified with the titles of rivers, until we began to lose the true conception of what a real river was.

The country behind us is a most singular one, and how to describe it is a problem with me; but from this point back to White-bear lake, I think it a better country than any I have seen in the north. There is a great deal of prairie—too much—but it is an excellent soil, and well adapted to the growth of agricultural products, and there is timber sufficient for farming purposes, if economically used.

From White-Bear lake to Otter-Tail-lake river, there is only timber clustering around a few lakes. The prairie is hilly and dry, and at many points no wood can be seen. At Otter-Tail-lake river, there is no wood, and thence to the crossing of Red river, it is a marsh without a brush. Both banks of Red river are densely covered with timber, varying in width from half a mile to two miles, and thence to Pembina, generally a flat marshy country, traversed by streams of the size known as branches, although called rivers, at intervals of fifteen and twenty miles. These have small strips of timber along their banks. When we get within fifty miles of Pembina, the country is better supplied with wood; but we are back some twenty-five miles from Red river, and close upon the southern range of Pembina mountains. I have never seen a more luxuriant growth of grass in any country. The early snows cover the grass and preserve it full of nutriment sufficiently for the subsistence of horses and cattle, and the immense herds of buffalo that winter in this seemingly inhospitable climate. The horse paws away the snow. The ox and buffalo remove it with the nose.

Indians.

Crossing the Mississippi river at Sank Rapids, about *one* mile below the mouth of the Watab river, we enter the country belonging to the Sioux Indians. The Watab river is the southern boundary of the Winnebago country. The country along our route to the Shayenne river is claimed by the Sioux, and their right is acknowledged by other tribes, with the exception of the portion traversed between the two crossings of Red river. The west of Red river was, and I believe is still claimed by the Sioux; but a long series of conflicts between them and the Chippewas, Crees, &c., have dispossessed the former and the country *north* of the Shayenne river, is now, and has been for a long period held by the Chippewas, and the Shayenne is tacitly acknowledged as the boundary between them.

The Chippewas are in possession of the country from Lake Superior to the Red river, and the Red river country; but they are divided into many bands that claim and exercise an independency of each other. The Chippewas of Lake Superior and the Mississippi river claim to be the Chippewa nation, and have a chief whom the different bands acknowledge as *first* in authority.

The general term of "Pillager Chippewas" is applied to the bands occupying the country about Otter-Tail lake, Red lake, Pembina, and they yield no obedience to, or acknowledgement of a *head chief*. They have participated in none of the treaties held with the Chippewas, and have received no annuities from the United States. They are a wild roving race of people, with but few wants, and these are supplied by the country. They know but little of the United States, and have no bonds uniting them with our government, as other tribes have, by the obligations of treaty stipulations. They live principally by the chase, and warlike by nature and habit, come often in conflict with their irreconcilable enemies, the Sioux, while hunting on the plains.

The Sessitou and Yanktou bands of Sioux living about Lake-qui-Porte, Big Stone lake, and Lake Travers, are a very numerous and intractable, proud and adventurous race of people, who assume, in their own name and right, to occupy and control the immense tract of country lying about Big Stone lake, back to the Missouri river, and up the Shayenne river to Devil's lake. Within these limits are the Plains, over which roam the

immense herds of Buffalo, that the whole north-west have a mutual interest in, and dependence on, for their subsistence. These Indians know but little of our government, and nothing from any benefits it has bestowed upon them. They disregard our exhortations to the habits and pursuits of civilization. We met, between the Mississippi and White-Bear lake, a few hunting parties of the Winnebagos, and at White-Bear lake, two parties of Winnebagos came to our camp. They were hunting, but none go farther west for fear of falling in with the Sioux. They were desirous of accompanying us, as they could go in safety to see the country farther back, and get among the buffalo, but were not prepared for so long a trip.

Near Elbow lake we saw an Indian on the prairie, and stopping him to "talk," others began to appear from all sides, and in a few minutes *twenty-five* of them were around us. They were the Chippewas from Otter-Tail lake. They said they were on a hunt; but it was evident from their appearance and manner they were a war party. I asked them to follow me into the camp, which they did, and I learned from them that a party of *eight* or *ten* were in the advance, seeking an opportunity to retaliate on the Sioux for the murder of a Chippewa woman, which had been committed by them sometime before.

They were a fine-looking party of Indians; seemed to be very friendly and glad to see us. I told them the President would be much pleased to see the frontier quiet, and all the Indian tribes disposed to be friendly toward one another. They say they act only in self-defence.

This band numbers about fifty warriors; they are friendly with the Mississippi Chippewas, and the Winnebagos. They seem to be well pleased with their home on Otter-Tail lake.

They say they get an abundance of game, fish, wild rice, the wild potato, and make large quantities of maple sugar. I gave them some tobacco, and they gave us a war-dance, and promised to return.

We saw no more Indians until we got to Pembina, where I find there are many that regard that as their home. At that time there were but few about. Both Indians and half-breeds had heard of the approach of a military force, and had waited a long time at Pembina for its arrival, and not seeing it when expected, imagined it had turned back on account of the unfavorable season.

The most of them had gone to the plains after buffalos. Between the 10th and 20th of August they began to return, and a large number of them came to see me. I told them I wanted to see them all together, when those that were still absent came in.

There are about one hundred and fifty warriors, which would make a total of five or six hundred Indians that claim to be Pembina Indians. They are almost entirely Chippewas; a few of them are Crees and Assinaboines. They were rather stragglers than a band, having no chief or organization amongst them. They seemed aware of the advantages of some ruling authority, and had endeavored, on several occasions, to select a chief, but the multitude of aspirants for the first place defeated all their attempts at organization.

When all the hunters returned, they came to see me. There were about one hundred warriors present of the Red river Chippewas. I told them I had been sent to that country by the President (these people recognizing no authority but that emanating from the President) to examine it and see them; that the President was a stranger to them and their country; that

he was anxious to bring them within the protecting guardianship of the United States; to provide them, as our other Indian tribes, with such necessaries of life as were now beyond their reach; to encourage and aid them in habits of life that would place them above a dependence on the game of the plains for their subsistence; that the President regretted the unfriendly feelings and hostile meetings between them and the Sioux, when they met on the plains; that it was his ardent wish that our frontiers might be traversed in safety by whites and Indians; and that he would adopt measures to enforce this wish by sending large military forces into the country; that he would try to bring about a brotherly feeling between them and the Sioux, and whichever was intractable or false to engagements would be punished; that if the practice of killing each other, whenever they met, was persisted in, the Indian who should kill one of another tribe, would be taken and perhaps turned over to the friends of the deceased. I urged them to organize themselves into a band, and appoint their chiefs that they might have some order and government amongst themselves with chiefs to arrange their matters of dispute; that as they were, if the United States had any business to transact with them, there was no person to address from whom the wishes of the people could be obtained, &c., &c.

They replied to me by several speakers, in substance: that they had separated from the Chippewas of Lake Superior a long time back, and came to that country in the pursuit of game and furs; that the country was then claimed by the Sioux; that they were constantly fighting with them until a recent period, since which they have been left in quiet and undisturbed possession. They and the Sioux now regard the Shayenne river as the boundary between them; neither ever crosses this river without apprehension.

Their "old men" say that the buffalo have decreased about one-half within their recollection; that the reflecting portion of them see very plainly that the buffalo must eventually disappear, and their children will be left to starve. They wish to make a commencement at cultivating the soil for their subsistence, but are without the means of doing it. Blankets and clothing, so indispensably necessary in that climate, can be obtained only from fur companies at exorbitant prices, and their peltries sell very low, &c. &c.

They could not agree about their chiefs, and requested me to appoint them, which I declined; but after much fruitless discussion, with no prospect of agreement amongst themselves, I told them that there were three men, whose names I gave them, that had been highly recommended to me as suitable men for chiefs; that they could retire and talk the matter over amongst themselves, and if they agreed to these men they could return the next day and inform me. They came back the next day in a body, and informed me that they had agreed upon the men I had nominated to them.

"Sakikwanel," in English "Green Feather," to be *principal chief*.

"Majekkwadjiwau," in English "End of the Current," to be 1st 2d chief.

"Kakakanawakkagan," in English "Long legs," to be 2d 2d chief.

These are the men they selected, with my assistance, for their chiefs. I did not feel authorized to appoint them, and intended to do it conditionally and submit their *credentials* to the Governor of Minnesota Territory, and he Superintendant of Indian Affairs therein; but finding that a conditional

exercise of authority in the matter would only give rise to farther dissensions, I presented these chiefs with *appointments*, in writing, dating the 24th of August, '49, and gave each of them a medal.

I am happy to say that, since my return, Governor Ramsey has approved of my course. After the above narrated ceremony was over, I again spoke to them, and told them what was expected of them in their intercourse with whites, with half-breeds, with each other, and with neighboring tribes. I told the chief what were his duties, and also the sub-chiefs.

The Indians had gotten their guns, and, after the "talk" was over, fired a salute to their new authorities, and I believe everybody was satisfied. We saluted the new dignitaries with several discharges from our howitzer.

These Indians remain but for a short time about Pembina: their great resort is to the *west*, in the ranges of Pembina and Turtle mountains, where furs and game are yet abundant; and *east* of Red river as far as Lac-des-Roseaux, forty or fifty miles, where Mr. Kittson has a branch of his trading establishment. Their reliance for food is principally on the buffalo, but they get some smaller game; and when these resources fail, the super-abundance of fish supplies them, which, as they can be caught by the women and children, who are always the most industrious, makes them careless about the future. They go to the "Plains" with the half-breeds after buffalo. While out on one of these excursions last summer, west of the Shayenne river and south of Devil's lake, they fell in with a large hunting party of Sioux: a conflict ensued, and several were killed on both sides, and many wounded. Many of the Red lake Chippewas were with them, and the total about *one hundred and fifty* warriors. The Sioux were more numerous, and from what I hear were successful in the engagement. Scalps were taken by both parties; and those in possession of them being the first to return to Pembina, the scalp-dance, if not to crowded houses, was, to large assemblies, the rage up to the time we left. The scalps are ornamented with ribbons and feathers, and fastened to the end of a stick about three feet long. In the dance, the women carry them elevated above the heads of the dancers. This inspires them in the "mazy" with unwonted hilarity and enthusiasm.

These Indians gather largely of peltries in the winter, and sell to the traders. Mr. Kittson, I think, has the principal trade with them; and the Indians themselves told me they preferred trading with him. But the Hudson Bay Company, so close by, and dealing in ardent spirits, get many of their furs. I would not state this from the many rumors I hear about this traffic, as the Directors of the Company have thought proper to state that this traffic was banished from their territories, had not the Indians told me that on their return from their hunts, when they had plenty of furs, they were in the habit of going to the English trading-house and having "big drunks," sometimes of a week or two in duration.

According to the best information I could get, the Hudson Bay Company will not sell liquor, but will exchange it for furs: money will not buy it, but furs can obtain it without limitation. I do not think this company exercise a very powerful influence over the Indians. If they ever did, that influence is now much impaired by a harsh and illiberal policy towards them. The Indians are not encouraged to visit the English settlements down about Fort Garey, and consequently, I am told, rarely go there. At the trading posts, when they have no furs, they are not noticed. The Crees, in what numbers I do not know, live about the Lake of the Woods,

Rainy lake, and extend to Hudson's bay. The largest portion of them live in the English territories; many of them, united with the Assinabwans, occupy the country west of the Assinabwan river.

I saw many of the Red lake Indians. They say they have in their band about 150 warriors. They like the country about Red lake. They say it is swampy, but with some fertile and tillable lands which yield them large quantities of corn and potatoes. The lake is filled with "white fish," and game yet abundant about it; all of which, added to their buffalo meat, is ample for their subsistence. They are in constant communication with the Chippewas of the Mississippi.

I would respectfully refer to a communication which will accompany this report, from the Rev. Mr. Belcourt, in relation to the Indians and half-breeds on that frontier. My statements of numbers, &c., are derived from the Indians, and they have very indefinite ideas about numbers.

I will add, that Mr. Belcourt is a Catholic missionary who has resided in that country for eighteen years, has learned the Indian languages spoken on that frontier, has traveled over the most of it, and is perhaps better acquainted with the people of that region and their peculiarities, than any other man in the country. I found him a polite, educated gentleman, with a self-sacrificing devotion to his high and holy calling, that cannot but excite admiration in a professor of Christianity, and respect from the unbeliever and heathen. His wish for assistance in the publication of his Dictionary of the Chippewa language, is worthy of the favorable consideration of a liberal government, which is striving in such profitless and numerous ways to ameliorate the condition of these unfortunate people.

Half-breeds.

This is a distinct class of people residing upon our frontier, differing materially from the Indian and the American (citizens of the U. S.,) in manners, customs and pursuits; and in numbers and position of sufficient importance to be worthy of consideration from our government. They are the descendants of the early colonists of that country, by intermarriage with the Chippewa, Cree and Assinabwan Indians, and were, at a period not remote, residents upon our soil in their entire strength. When the line of the 49th parallel was marked, and the Hudson Bay Company found themselves located on our soil, the trading-posts of that company were removed down the Red river about sixty miles. The half-breeds being principally in the employ of that company, and dependent upon them, were obliged to follow. This obligation arose from their inability to get the necessaries of life from other sources than from the agents of this company. This removal, I believe, was about the year 1824, when there was no communication between that point and the Mississippi river except by braving the perils of a long and difficult journey, through a wild waste of country inhabited alone by numerous hostile tribes of Indians. With this view of the case, we may well say they were compelled to leave our soil. Within the last five or six years, the settlements on the Mississippi river having extended themselves to a point within some 400 miles of Pembina; the establishment of a Fur Company post on our side of the line by Mr. Kittson, and the annual transportation, by large trains of carts, of merchandize to that country; these half-breeds have began to return, and are fast filling up again the frontier within our borders.

The Hudson Bay Company have a charter which gives them the control

of an immense territory, within which they reserve or appropriate entirely to themselves the fur trade. This is the only profitable business of the country, and a monopoly of it by a company must necessarily make dependents of all other inhabitants. This restriction cannot be infracted within their territories, or by their residents out of them, without a liability to imprisonment and fines. The farmer's title to his land is with the condition that he is not to engage in the fur trade. The merchant, the mechanic, the day-laborer and the hunter, are residents only upon this condition; and the entire interests of the country are thus made to center around a business that the great majority are excluded from. I was told on my arrival at Pembina, that the half-breed population were anxious to return to their former homes within our borders; but not having imbibed any prepossessions of the country—its appearance not being calculated to inspire them—I was incredulous until I learned that it was rather to free themselves from disadvantageous restrictions, than from preference for a locality which, according to accounts given me, is inferior to the one they now occupy. They also have a lingering fondness for the place of their birth, where reminiscences of parents and childish sports are revived by surrounding objects.

They furnished me with a list of the actual inhabitants of Pembina, exclusive of Indians, giving the names of heads of families, and dividing the whole into males and females, as follows:—177 families; of these 511 are males, and 515 are females; making a total of 1026 now living at Pembina.

They have about 600 carts, 300 oxen, 300 work horses, 150 horses for the chase, 1500 head of horned cattle, a few hogs, no sheep. The half-breed population on the English side is between 4000 and 5000. Of these it is confidently expected by those living in our territory, that the greater portion of them will remove to the United States. From my conversations with them, I think so myself; and I am almost certain of it, if the U. S. prohibit the half-breeds of the English territory from coming into our territories to hunt buffalo.

The greater part of these people are descendants of the Canadian French. They speak the French language, are nearly all Catholics, with mild and gentle manners, great vivacity, generous and honest in their transactions, and disposed to be a civil and orderly community. They are hale and hearty, robust men, evidently accustomed to hardships and exposure, to which they submit cheerfully. They can hardly be called an industrious people, which is rather attributable to circumstances than disposition. I am told they commenced farming in the country, but finding no market for their produce, and having much to buy, it was necessary that they should resort to occupations that would yield them the means of purchasing the necessaries of life. At that time, the Hudson Bay Company traders were the only possessors of merchandize in the country, and would dispose of it only in a way that would promote their own trade. This was by the employment of trappers, voyageurs, and hunters on the plains. From the last they got their "dried meat" and "pemmican," articles of subsistence which are almost the sole dependence of the people of that country. This always finds a ready sale for money or goods. Into these employments the people have been driven by necessity, in consequence of which they had to neglect their farms; the practice continuing, they abandoned them, and are now the victims of occupations they cannot discard, and are able to obtain from them only a bare subsistence. They now

devote themselves entirely to fur hunting and the chase; by the former they command some money, and by the latter they live. They go to the plains in the Spring and Fall, in parties of from 300 to 500 hunters. They appoint, before going out, a captain who controls and directs their hunts, which assume rather the character of an expedition than the unregulated excursions of Indians or whites when abroad with such objects. Their families go with them, and each family has from one to ten carts. For an account of their mode of hunting, of preparing their meat, &c. &c., I will refer you to a sprightly narrative written by the Rev. Mr. Belcourt, which will accompany this report. From these hunts they procure the supplies they subsist on. Within our territory there is no farming; the small gardens they cultivate yield so triflingly, that they are hardly worthy of notice.

They build log-cabins generally in the timber which they occupy in the winter, and leave in the summer. Each family has its "lodge" made of dressed buffalo skin, and when pitched, it is of a conical shape ten or fifteen feet high, and from ten to fifteen feet in diameter at its base. These have a doorway, with a buffalo skin hung over it, which is lifted for an entrance. The fires are built in the centre, and the apex of the lodge has an opening through which the smoke escapes. At this opening a wing is attached, so that by giving it a certain position with reference to the wind, there is always a draft sufficient to carry off the smoke.

I found the Half-breeds possessing the semblance of a government. They had a council consisting of five of their principal men, in which was vested a jurisdiction relating to transactions among themselves. On the 24th of August these people had returned from their Spring hunt, and about 200 of the hunters came to see me. They had appointed four men as their speakers. I told them that in virtue of their Indian extraction, those living on our side of the line were regarded as being in possession of the Indians' right upon our soil; that they were on our frontiers treated with as component parts of the Indian tribes; that they either came under the Indians' laws or regulations, or formed such for themselves. I urged them to organize themselves into a band under a council or chiefs, invested with ample authority to act in their name, in all matters which might arise to affect their interests, to preserve and enforce order and harmony; that the President would not allow them to engage in any of the difficulties among our Indians on the plains; that they were expected to live amicably with all Indian tribes, &c., &c.; generally to be good citizens, &c., &c. They told me they would return the next day when they had perfected an organization they were then arranging. My talk had taken a wide range, but not of importance enough to be even abridged. They wished to reflect and have consultations upon it.

The next day they returned in about the same numbers, and presented me with nine names as the committee they had selected for the future government of the Half-breed population within our borders. Mr. Wilky, the first on the list, is the president of the committee. He is a French Half-breed, of a good character, well disposed towards the United States, and intelligent. The other eight of the council are men the most esteemed in the country, and friendly toward the United States. They say it is their wish to become agriculturists. It is their intention to make their improvements within our territory. They complain of the immense quantities of buffaloes that are killed annually and carried into the Hudson's Bay territory. They

want some encouragement and aid from the United States in affording them facilities for communication with the States. They are anxious to have a military post established among them. They complain of the want of a market for produce, &c., with a variety besides, but of a nature so utterly at variance with the usual demands of a people upon a government, that I made no record of them.

I told them that, on the subject of the English hunters killing buffalo, I had no instructions but from the facts that the Indians were making the same complaints; that Major Sumner had been ordered to the plains a few years before with a military force purposely to drive back these invaders, and the Hudson's Bay Co. were so stringent in their laws about hunting in their territory, I thought it more than probable that the United States would forcibly prevent such trespasses, were they persisted in. They say that Major Sumner directed them to put up notices prohibiting that practice; that they had done so, but they were not respected. I told them they ought with safety to act upon the advice of Major Sumner, and enforce it, if need be, and our government would support them, as Major Sumner was an authorized agent and reported his acts on that frontier, and if not approved, they would have been corrected.

Their desire for a military post is urged on the ground alone, that it will give them a market. I told them our posts were established for the protection of the country. That if an armed force were necessary there to protect the rights of the citizens, or to support the laws of the country, it might be granted them, but that I was confident they would never get a military post among them for the sole purpose of affording a market for the surplus produce. They are beginning to be imbued with the progressiveness of the age, and expect soon, with the patronage of the government, to see their wilderness smiling in prosperity and beauty under the invigorating influences of railroads and steamboats. The matter-of-fact business of cultivating the soil and gathering about them all the comforts and enjoyments that a provident industry can bestow, is tame in their excited imaginations, and they did not listen with much satisfaction to the representations I gave them of the prosperous independence of our farmers, and how they attained it. They have nothing to sell, and in fact (in the way of produce) having nothing to live on; still they clamor for a market.

As the letter of the Secretary of the Interior to the President, in relation to that frontier, was sent to me with my instructions, I ventured to suggest to them that the United States contemplated opening that country for settlement. To do which it would be necessary, first, to extinguish the Indian title. That this was not determined upon; and as it was with a view of ameliorating their condition by extending to them in full the rights and privileges of citizens of the United States and the benefit of our laws and institutions, much would depend upon their wishes on the subject. The Half-breeds are delighted at such a prospect, and would readily acquiesce in reasonable treaty stipulations for the country. The Indians are more phlegmatic of their high appreciation of such a blessing, though they did not seem averse to it; and I doubt not would be easily induced to consent. I threw out the suggestion that they might cogitate upon it in their musing hours, and then they will be ready to act if they should ever be called upon.

On the 26th of August when we left Pembina the half breeds informed me they would escort us a short distance on the road; on leaving, we fired

them a parting salute from our howitzer. About seventy-five of them well-mounted and with fire-arms accompanied us two or three miles, and when about to turn back they informed me they would give us one volley, and drawing up in line with great promptitude and regularity fired *one* volley. Reloading almost instantly they gave two to the Governor of Minnesota, and again they gave *three* to the President of the United States, with a loud and prolonged cheer. I told them that we were under many obligations to them for their polite and kind attentions to us while in their country and were thankful for the testimonial they had just given us of the kind feeling they entertained towards us; that I would inform the President and Governor of the favourable estimation in which they were held and of the enthusiasm which their names inspired amongst a people living on our extreme and most isolated frontier. This ended our visit at Pembina, and left us on our way home.

Military.

Under my instructions as follows:—"It is proposed to establish a new military post on or near the Red river of the North, and at a distance from Fort Gaines, not exceeding 200 hundred miles. For this purpose it is necessary to make a military examination of that country." I have taken "Sank rapids" on the Mississippi, 76 miles from Fort Snelling, as our starting point, because it is the *one* where the Mississippi will be crossed by all expeditions to the Red river country. I selected the route crossing at Sank rapids, in preference to the one by "Crow Wing," by the advice of every person with whom I talked on the subject, some of whom had been over both. The route taken is prairie almost the entire way, and in a dry spring and summer or in the fall there cannot be a better road, as we found on our return trip. The route by Crow Wing and the head of Ottertail lake is marshy woodland traversed by innumerable streams, covered by "terris tramblantes," and with the exception of late in the fall and winter cannot be travelled over without great difficulty, even by the Red river cart. This is not an unconsidered assertion, for it has been so represented to me by the most reputable men in the country; and if it needed any confirmation, it would receive it from the fact that the Red river carts do not travel it, nor is this from habit, for their conductors have been over the route and condemn it.

Having in view our extending frontier and the nature of the country, I venture to suggest that Fort Gaines is unfortunately situated. I should do so with more reluctance, were I not aware of the fact that the distinguished officer who located it, pronounced against it when he examined the country and said that Sank rapids was the place for the fort. Fort Gaines never can connect or be one of the chain of posts to protect our frontier. It is in the Winnebago country and near the Chippeway line. The Mississippi Chippeways are peaceable among themselves and well disposed towards the United States. The Winnebagos have no inducements to seek an outlet north; their wishes are to return south; being prevented in this, they will naturally turn to the west, over the prairies after buffalo. This condition of things would make impossible any disagreement between these two tribes, and Fort Gaines would not be in a country where its influence is required. Any movement from that post to the west could be made more easily and expeditiously by coming down 45 or 50 miles to Sank rapids for a starting point. The country west of Fort Gaines is woods

with many little streams and springs, around which bogs and marshes abound, over which it is almost impossible to travel, except in very dry weather. To the north-west and north it is worse, and those who have travelled over it tell me they will never do it again, unless late in the fall or winter, when wood is an object on account of cold weather.

The Red river country will be reached almost exclusively by the route crossing at Sank rapids as well as points higher up on the St. Peters, Big Stone lake and Lake Francis. By this route will those points connect with the head of navigation on the Mississippi, and if Fort Gaines were at Sank rapids it would be the commencement and depôt of a line of posts that will eventually extend to the Missouri river.

From Sank rapids to the *post* we put up on Red river it is 163 miles. This is a wide interval to make between posts in so wild a region, surrounded by the wildest and worst of Indians. By a reference to the map it will be seen, the meeting point between the Sioux from Lac-qui-Parle, Big Stone lake and Lake Francis; the Chippeways from Otter-tail lake, the headwaters of the Mississippi and the Winnebagos would be some 50 or 60 miles this side of the post and such is the fact. War parties formed on either side skirt the lakes along the route we passed over and a little east of it, on what is called the "Coteau du grand Bois," and there seek to intercept individuals or small parties of hunters. This practice is what keeps up the active feuds among them. The time has passed when the Indians met each other in pitched battles, and now we have not nations to pacify, but individual rancor to assuage and eradicate.

White Bear lake is a position that probably combines more advantages for a military post than any other in that country at this time. It is 75 miles from Sank rapids and 88 from the post set up on the Red river. It is central with reference to the bands of Indians above referred to, and a force there would have the tendency to draw about Indians from each surrounding tribe as they would know that they could come to the post and be protected. This association would in a little time cause friendships to spring up among them, the influence of which would be felt by each nation. The position of the post on Red river is out of the range of these Indians, with the exception of the Otter-tail lake band, and beyond the point where a barrier or a neutral ground, that a military post makes, is needed. At Fort Snelling I have seen the Sioux and Chippeways in friendly converse, and passing their pipes in the most amicable manner when if they had met away from the post each would have been striving for the other's scalp.

The still more distant Indians that have their abode on the Missouri river, Devil's lake, Pembina and Red lake, together with the formidable body of hunters that congregate about and depart from Lake Travers for the plains, must be dealt with by expeditions and a vigorous policy. At Pembina I examined the country for an eligible site for a military post. This, without locating or inducing the people to think as a matter of course that a post would be established; but in order to report "the best locality for a post in that region." I don't think there can be any doubt about the particular district of country that will become the important one near that boundary. Pembina, by which is understood the district of country above the mouth of Pembina river, must ever be the point around which all business and enterprise will center. East of it the line is not approachable, nor are there any points that will particularly invite settlements. From

Fort Snelling to reach any point on this line, must be by the way of Pembina. Any military expeditions to or from the line, must be made by this route, or by boats. From Lake Superior by Vermillion lake, although there are heights of land marked by the maps, I am told the country could not be traveled over; and all communication between that lake and the Red river country, is made through Rainy lake, Rainy lake river, Lake of the Woods, and into Lake Winnipeg.

West of Red river for about 30 miles and Pembina mountain, the country is marshy, and there are no advantages in route, within that distance, to reach the line, over the one by or to Pembina. To strike the line at Pembina mountain, would lead over a broken, woodland country; and in the wet season, the miry nature of all woodland soil in that region, would present as much of an obstacle as the marshes of the bottoms or prairies. The Red river being the largest river in the country, and holding out the prospect of being sometime in the future navigated by steamers, has brought and will bring all settlements as close upon it as possible. The English settlement is on its banks, and the half century or more that has elapsed since the early colonists established themselves there, has not served to extend the increasing population back from this river. Pembina is the natural gate through which all intercourse between the U. S. and the Hudson Bay territories will find its passage. For these reasons, I deemed it the most suitable locality for a post. It has plenty of timber, good water, good soil, is a healthful point, and is the most accessible one in the country. There is no stone. If subsistence can be had, the occupations of the people of the country will have to change from what they are at present.

As to the necessity of a post there, I do not think at the present time it is called for on any score. The declamation about outrages committed on our rights by the Hudson Bay Company, is altogether imaginative. This company has a chartered monopoly of a profitable trade, extending over an immense territory, together with a legislative jurisdiction to a certain extent. That the factors of this company should seek to promote their own interest, is not incompatible with the rights of a neighboring nation, provided they do not infract treaty stipulations, or extend their laws beyond their own territories. The regulation that some difficulty has arisen about, is the one that prohibits the dealing in furs within the territories of the company, by any person not authorized by said company. An instance, and the only one I heard of, about which some noise was made, and which I see was reported to Washington from this post, was in effect as follows:

Mr. Kittson, the agent of the American Fur Company at Pembina, sent an English half-breed back in the mountains amongst the hunters and trappers, with a supply of goods for traffic with the Indians for furs, doubtless intending he should confine himself to U. S. territory.

This half-breed was reported to the company as having been found on its territory trading in furs. When he returned to the English settlement he was apprehended, and imprisoned to await his trial. Mr. Kittson and the half-breed both contended that he had not traded upon the company's territories. The half-breed population became excited, and in a body presented themselves armed and demanded the release of this prisoner. The authorities refused at first, but afterwards complied.

The whole affair, according to the accounts given me, seemed an attempt on the part of the company to maintain their authority, without

wishing to extend beyond their own limits. Mr. Kittson, when visiting the English settlement, was arrested as an accessory, but was not confined or held to bail, a promise being exacted from him to attend his trial when they met.

Another case which I believe was reported to Washington, was: That two soldiers, deserters from the garrison at Fort Garry, had concealed themselves near the trading-house on our side of the line; that a party of soldiers came up to the line, a few of them passed over and stealthily kept along the bank of the river, and, unobserved, apprehended the deserters and returned. As it was reported to me by people living in U. S. territory, they did not march an armed party across the line and forcibly arrest and carry off citizens of the U. S.

I am sorry to say that the liberality of our government on that frontier, is not reciprocated by the Hudson Bay Company. The subsistence of the half-breed population of the English settlements, the Indians, and the employees of the company, is obtained from the buffalo of our plains. Their hunters and trappers prosecute their pursuits irrespective of boundary-lines, and the traffic in ardent spirits with the Indians is permitted on our borders. They deny us all privileges on their territory.

The English have a force at Fort Garry, about 60 miles below Pembina. It is composed of pensioners from the English army, numbering about 100 men. These troops are in the pay of the company, and they are there for the protection and enforcement of this monopoly. When difficulties were apprehended between Great Britain and the United States about the Oregon boundary line, a regiment of English troops was sent to Fort Garry; but it has been withdrawn within two or three years.

The Adjutant-General in his instructions to me, says that all our frontier posts are established with reference to our Indian relations. With that view of the case, a post at Pembina would be entirely useless. A post there would be to overawe the Indians and half-breeds, and protect our rights on the frontier. The first is not now needed, as both Indians and half-breeds are well disposed towards the U. S., and with no discordant elements, unless freshly sown amongst them, to make difficulties even probable. The second object does not demand the interposition of authority, as I find no instances have occurred that seemed like a wish to trespass upon our rights, unless the habit that the English hunters have of crossing the line after buffalo is an infraction of our rights; and in that case, I do not doubt but that if they were informed that they would be met on the plains and their horses and carts taken from them, they would cease to trouble us on that score.

That it would be an advantage to the country to establish a post there, is, in my opinion, problematical. I know that the general impression is that a military post, in a new country, gives a prosperous activity to agricultural interests in its vicinity, by the public disbursements that are made. My own experience has shown me, that pursuits about a post are made to conform to the probable wants of the public service, and interests that do not contribute directly to these, languish. Labor and articles of trade have a fictitious value, and from the limited wants of a post a few persons necessarily become monopolists, and the nine out of ten become factious discontents.

The half-breed population on that frontier have been too long dependents on the Hudson Bay Company, which accounts for their present poverty;

and this poverty will cling to them as long as they have a probable chance of supporting themselves without cultivating the soil. They ask for troops to afford them a market; and I venture to predict that if a post is established there, and this market that they ask for is not to the extent they anticipate, they will petition for the removal of the troops.

As the letter of the Secretary of the Interior to the President, advising the extinguishment of the Indian title and the opening of that country for settlement, was sent to me with my instructions, it may not be inappropriate in me to say something on that subject. If that country were opened for settlement, and the American and half-breed could go there and locate themselves upon their own lands, with deeds for them that would place their tenure above the whims of a company or the restrictions that are placed upon residents in an Indian country, it would give them a position that they have never known, but would soon appreciate. Being then citizens of an organized territory, with laws in operation, administered by legalized agents, the country would soon become an orderly and a respected portion of the United States.

A district of country extending *thirty* or *forty* miles on both sides of Red river and the same distance up it, will throw into the market the best or the most desirable portion of the country, and be sufficient for the demands there, for a period beyond which it is hardly foresight to attempt to provide. I think it would be folly to expect a large immigration into that country from the U. States. It will settle with the half-breed population and Canadians. This population will be a valuable one, for they are a good class of people, accustomed to the rigors of that climate, and are free from the morbid restlessness that so strongly characterizes the adventurer from the United States.

The wild Indians that meet on the plains, can be controlled by an occasional expedition there; but I think the greatest bar to quiet on those prairies is found in the warlike spirit and power of the numerous body of Sioux hunters issuing from about Lake Travers, and who attempt to control the plains. If it is proposed to prevent these difficulties by means of posts, the best location for one would be at Lake Travers. It would act directly upon the Sioux, and, by the exercise of a proper influence over them, the plains would be left in peace.

If a post is established at Pembina, it would be unjust to troops, and an injury to our country, to send a small force there. It is near 500 miles from our settlements or posts, and troops would in case of trouble have to depend entirely on themselves, without the hope of succor, surrounded by Indians and half-breeds. *Two hundred and fifty* men (*five* companies under the present organization,) would be the least force that ought to make its appearance there; then, if needed, advantageous results might be obtained. A display of forces on a smaller scale, would only exhibit our weakness. In illustration of the foregoing, I will mention an instance that occurred at Fort Garry, the English post below. A half-breed, a supposed offender against the laws of the Fur Company, was arrested for trial. The half-breeds, to the number of more than five hundred, united and demanded his release. The English refused to release him, but did not dare to bring him to trial. The half-breeds then consented that his trial might proceed, but the authorities, finding they could not punish in case of conviction, in the face of such a large armed force, abandoned the prosecution and the culprit escaped.

At Fort Garry they have about 100 pensioners: this force not being able to contend with the formidable array assembled to resist them, were constrained to be passive lookers-on. Now the half-breeds know their power, and the force at Fort Garry is contemptible in their sight, and a discredit to the power and authority of England.

Lake Winnipeg is about 100 miles north of the 49th parallel, and is the basin of water into which Red river debouches. This river, from what I learn, is navigable for steamers from Lake Winnipeg to the mouth of Red lake river. Above this point I have no reliable information, but would judge its navigation would be attended with too many difficulties for it ever to become a channel of trade. Red river, a few miles above the post we put up, is easily fordable; and from this point down to Red lake river, its tributaries are small, and I would suppose did not swell its channel into a navigable stream. It is narrow, and very crooked.

The outlet of Lake Winnepeg is called Nelson's river, and empties into Hudson's Bay at York Factory, a depôt of the Hudson's Bay Company. This river is full of rapids and cannot be navigated by row boats—several portages have to be made.

I will add, in concluding my report, and without expecting any importance will be attached to it, that I think the system of protecting our frontier by small detached posts, is a defective one. As an instance, I will take this frontier where there are *four* companies of infantry and *one* of dragoon, making, when the companies are full, about 250 men. If this force were at *one* post, there could be sent into this field, at any time, at least *two hundred* men. This force would be respectable and influential under all circumstances—expeditions could be made to the "Plains," and amongst the most numerous tribes of Indians. It would be sufficient when excitement arises among Indians at payments &c., to prevent disturbances. Place this force strategetically and the frontier will have a better guard than 1000 men can give, scattered in detachments of one or two companies. A post of *one* company, which will not generally have an average strength of more than *forty* men; after deducting from this number the sick, disabled, and those necessary to be left at a post for the security of public property, &c., and *twenty-five* men will be the most that can be taken into the field. This force is insufficient for any good. Its presence may sometimes prevent difficulties, but if so, it would be solely from the disinclination of the Indians to embroil themselves with the United States, and not from any fears or apprehensions about the result. Seeing these small forces alone (their minds do not carry them beyond) gives them disparaging impressions of the power of the United States. Indians have no fixed abode and the location of troops about haunts they may have, only causes them to take up others, and the little posts that are established are useless. Protection cannot be given by placing a sentinel at each man's door. Points must be selected, giving the best command of the district of country and occupied in force, that can meet any probable emergency.

Fort Snelling is a point admirably calculated for the concentration of a force. It is at the head of navigation on the Mississippi, where it is easy of access and easily supplied, with an Indian country almost surrounding it—a country penetrable in almost every direction, with no point where troops would be suddenly wanted that could not be reached in four or five days. It is convenient for fitting out expeditions for distant points. A

respectable force seen on the prairies amongst our wild Indians every summer would be of incalculable advantage.

I take pleasure in acknowledging the patient, prompt, energetic and soldierly conduct of Company "D," 1st dragoons; exposed to every privation and hardship, they continued the march and returned, with the unyielding spirit of true soldiers; 2d lieut. A. D. Nelson, 6th Infantry, commander and quarter master of the expedition, had laborious, difficult, and annoying duties to perform—he had also in charge a mountain howitzer. The manner in which these duties were performed, was of inestimable advantage to the expedition and highly creditable to himself; 2d lieut. T. F. Castor, 1st dragoons, after assuming command of Company "D," 2d dragoons, at Pembina, united his efforts with the company, and most faithfully performed his duties.

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I have, in the foregoing pages, attempted to lay before you the information I was sent to obtain. I have been prolix and I fear not satisfactory, but if it contains the information wanted, however disconnected or plainly put down, my only object will be attained.

I have written hurriedly and have had nothing to refer to, but my own notes. I did not commence this report until after my return from Iowa.

I am sir, very respectfully, your obedient humble servant,

S. WOODS,

Brevet Major, Commanding Expedition to Red River.

To General R. Jones,
Adjutant-General U. S. A.,
Washington City, D. C.

PEMBINA, TERRITORY OF MINNESOTA,
August 20th, 1849.

MY DEAR SIR: I have received in due course your letter of the 12th instant, which requests me to be so kind as to give you in writing such observations as my long sojourn in this country may have enabled me to make, as well of the Indian tribes inhabiting it as of the white or half-breeds who reside within its borders. To do this properly would require an extended detail, which the short time you intend remaining here, as well as my own duties leave small space for performance. Nevertheless, the desire I have to gratify you, as well as the happiness it will afford me, if I can in any manner, be it never so little, either by my writings or other works, hasten the time for the melioration of the condition of a people, too long miserable, do not permit me to refuse entirely. My reply will accordingly be couched in perspicuous and concise language.

We understand here, that the district or department called Pembina, comprises all the country or basin which is irrigated or traversed by the tributaries of the Red river, south of the line of the forty-ninth parallel of latitude. The prairies, rivers and lakes which extend to the height of land of the Mississippi, and the immense plains where feed innumerable herds of bison to the westward, and from which the Chippewas and half-breeds of this region obtain their subsistence, contain within their limits a country about four hundred miles from north to south, and more than five hundred miles from east to west.

Although the Chippewas have been for ages in possession of this country, tradition teaches us that it previously belonged to the Sioux. The

Chippewas then inhabited the region lying between the Sault of St. Mary's, from which that tribe takes its name (Sateaux) and Lake Winnepeg; the Crees, their allies, occupying that from Lake Winnepeg and other lakes as far as the Kis-is-kad-ji-wan (and not Laskid jewan) river and towards the Assiniboin river, which, running from west to east, debouches into the Red river about 49° 55, which is also designated by the Chippewas as West Red river, also the great Red river; the banks of which were the field of battle of those warlike tribes, who were alike formidable for their numbers. The many and bloody combats which occurred every year on these prairies have apparently caused the designation of *Red* to be given to this river, for neither in its course nor at its source is the water tinged with that color. These plains remained the scene of contention; nevertheless oftener the residence of the Sioux than of the other tribes, until that nation was divided into two bodies, occasioned by dissensions originating in jealousy of the women which proved sufficiently powerful to produce a bloody conflict ending in their becoming irreconcilable enemies even to this day. One of these divisions retained the country and the name of *Pawn*, Sioux, while the less powerful and flying party took refuge in the rocky precipices of the Lake of the Woods and assumed the name of *Assinipawn*, or Sioux of the Rocks. These last then allied themselves permanently with the Crees and Chippewas, and by reason of their superior numbers when combined, they forced the Sioux to fly nearly to the Cheyesme river, which is now regarded as the line between these tribes.

Although the Crees and Chippewas were then extremely numerous, they are far from being sufficiently so now to spread over the vast region they temporarily occupy. The small-pox, not very long since, found its way among them, and not only decimated, but in many of their camps, did not even leave one in ten alive. Here on the banks of the Pembina there is not a spot near the river where the plough-share does not throw out of the furrow quantities of human bones, remains of the destructive scourge.

Generally speaking, each post of trade has from two to three hundred hunters which would form a population—estimating three as the proportion to one hunter—of nine hundred souls for each three hundred hunters. This granted, taking the posts of Red lake, of Reed lake, of Pembina, and at the source of Pembina river or Turtle mountain, at the minimum rate supposed, say two hundred hunters each at the four places of trade, and we would have a total of about two thousand four hundred souls; a number which I believe to be less than the truth.

The Crees and Assiniboins regard themselves as equally masters of these lands with the Chippewas, having acquired them jointly with the latter, at the expense of their blood. Nevertheless, the Mouse river, which, in its course, approaches within thirty miles of the Missouri, and empties itself into the Assiniboin river, about ninety miles from its mouth, would appear to be the true line, which is never passed by the hunters of the tribe, except perhaps towards its source where it approaches Moose mountain, which is a point where they are accustomed to concentrate, and for the most part reside. The Crees and Assiniboins form sometimes a camp of four or five hundred lodges, each lodge containing two or three families. All things taken into consideration, and placing the number of souls at ten to each lodge, I estimate the sum total of these bands at about five thousand.

The Chippewas, like all barbarous tribes, are much demoralized, and,

above all others, superstitious to excess. All that is marvellous is believed without examination, however ridiculous it may be. With them dreams are revelations, and the bird, man, or monster who is the hero, or the subject of them, is regarded as a tutelary deity; and the same is the case should it prove a stone, a tree, or a serpent. They make an image of wood or other substance, which is carefully preserved, and which they invoke in their moments of sickness, or when pressed by the pangs of hunger. They make occasional sacrifices, principally of dogs.

Polygamy, although common among them, is often the cause of jealousies, and even of suicides. Strong liquors have for them an irresistible attraction, of which fact the English traders, whose desire for gain knows no bounds, take every advantage, thus making the worst passion of these poor people to subserve their own pecuniary interest. The traffic in intoxicating drinks is the abhorrence of those missionaries who are consecrated to the object of Christianizing these heathens. The Chippewas themselves, notwithstanding their passion for rum, with no desire to depreciate (which would little be suspected), look upon it as an infernal means, on the part of English traders, to make use of rum for the purpose of despoiling the poor Indians of all they possess, and for such prices as they choose to give. It is an insult to humanity and to justice, which it should be the glory of governments to repress. I never would end was I to commit to paper all the abominations caused by this traffic on our border. We have made application to the English government, among other things, for the abolition of this commerce in liquor; but it seems that with that court interest preponderates over the rights of humanity, for a deaf ear has been turned to our demands. The committee of the Hudson Bay Company in England has had the impudence to reply to a petition of the Bishops of Canada, asking for the abolition of this branch of their trade with the Indians, "that they had already ceased it in all the countries under their jurisdiction!" Who could have supposed such audacious mendacity when we know that one-fifth in value of all their importations last year consisted of rum?

The Chippewas who reside upon the line, or thereabouts, are generally miserably poor, sluggards, having no aptitude but for the chase. They neglect all sorts of land culture. They live upon fish in summer, and rabbits in winter. The moose, the elk, the reindeer, and the bear have become very rare, and none but the most skilful hunters can kill enough of these animals to support themselves during the winter. The Red lake Chippewas are the only ones who appreciate the importance of cultivation of the soil, and among them only the women labor in raising corn and potatoes. This tribe or band appears, however, more industriously disposed than the others, and more provident of the necessaries of life; and they take advantage also of the abundance of maple in their country to make quantities of sugar.

The Chippewas in general are much addicted to play, and when assembled together in camp, they pass whole days and nights in playing, singing, and beating the drum; for all these go together, and are accompanied by grimaces, all of which would appear to a spectator unacquainted with their customs, as indications of frenzy. These Indians, not having become sufficiently industrious to fabricate objects of luxury, seek even in the dust for earth of divers colors wherewith to paint their faces and bodies in different ways, more or less fantastically, while they braid or twist their

hair according to their particular tastes, intertwined with buttons, feathers, and other gew-gaws, so that they are frequently so completely disfigured, that one must be gifted with more than usual gravity, not to give vent to roars of laughter upon being visited by one of these exquisites.

The Western Chippewas live principally, as well as the Crees and Assiniboins, upon the flesh of the bison, which they prepare in such a manner as to preserve it a long time, as you may see by a report of a hunting excursion, which I have had the honor to present you. Idle and improvident as they are, notwithstanding the abundance of bison, they are often a heavy charge upon the half-breeds, to whom they have recourse in seasons of distress.

Although endowed with much shrewdness they are very difficult to be taught, generally taxing the patience of their instructors by the little memory and intelligence they display. They have school-books and prayers printed in their language, as well as a grammar. A dictionary complete, which forms in manuscript a quarto volume, has not been printed. I am only waiting to procure the means for effecting this object, and the work would be extremely useful. I would be really happy if some influential personage would procure this favor to be done me by Congress.

The Chippewas have a mode of writing peculiar to themselves. This is by means of hieroglyphics, to which an arbitrary idea is attached, and is found on the handles of their pipes, on their tombs, and on the bark whereon they write their war songs, or their songs of love or ridicule; also their invocations to the different deities adored by them.

The Chippewas, albeit of careless and beggarly habits and of a character marked by much *sangfroid*, are ordinarily civil and well-inclined towards the people of civilized nations, in whom they admire the ingenuity displayed in the manufacture of those articles of exchange, which they receive in the course of trade. Nevertheless this mildness of manner so manifest in their general demeanor, is changed to a worse than canine rage, when they engage in war. Revenge and superstition render them warlike, and when conquerors, wo to the wretch who falls into their hands. This has been illustrated by an occurrence which took place not fifteen days since. The Chippewas having killed three or four Sioux in battle, besides the scalps, cut from the thighs of some of their victims strips of flesh, which they cured in the same way with the meat of the bison, for the purpose of being preserved for their war feasts.

A peace was happily concluded between the western Chippewas and Mandans which has been faithfully observed for six years. We might possibly persuade the former to make a treaty of pacification also with the Sioux, if we could persuade ourselves of the sincerity of the latter. Several essays have been made to effect this desirable object, but the Chippewas assert that the Sioux are always the first to break their engagements. This fact, taken into consideration with the knowledge possessed by the Chippewas, that the Sioux frequently kill white men as well as themselves, causes me to believe that any steps that we can take to obtain a peace between these hostile tribes, would be but labor lost. We have but to desire that the government of the United States, whose wisdom is admired by all the Indian tribes I have visited, even to the Upper Missouri, will declare that it intends to put a stop to hostilities, and will exact peace under the pain of imprisonment or such other punishment as may be judged proper to induce them to keep it.

The hunt for fur-bearing and other animals of the woods becoming considerably less each year, it is much to be desired that these poor people should be imbued with a taste for cultivation of the soil. Already they begin to feel sensible of the necessity of this step, if not for themselves, at least for their descendants, and it is a blessing to them, which many of them appreciate, that the government is disposed to pay them liberally for their lands, the prices of which when received will serve the better disposed portion of them, to establish themselves like the whites, and live a civilized life which they all foresee must be embraced sooner or later in spite of their indolence.

The Chippewas are commonly attached to their traders, particularly when they remark in them that uprightness and kindness to the Indians which cause them to be called *father* by the latter. If, on the contrary, deceit and bad faith appear in their dealings, they are held in sovereign contempt by the Indians, which is manifested on all occasions with that frankness which is their characteristic. A chief will say to a Bourgeois (head trader at a postorina district) "You lack for nothing, and yet you have a longing for my trash (or rags)."

I am happy to be able to say that those American traders I have known show far more fair dealing and honesty in their trade than the British traders. This accounts for the fact, without doubt, that the honest trader that we have at Pembina (Mr. Norman Kittson succeeds so well in his business, notwithstanding the opposition of the Hudson Bay Company, and in spite of the *rum* which they make use of in profusion.

The half-breeds are much more numerous than the Indians in this Department. There are mixed bloods of different tribes which spread themselves from the stony mountains of the Atlantic Ocean. We have counted the descendants of thirteen different bands, but the very great majority are of Cree or Chippewa extraction and of this majority the Chippewas have the fewer number.

The half-breeds are mild, generous, polished in their manners, and ready to do a kindness; of great uprightness, not over anxious of becoming rich, contenting themselves with the necessaries of life, of which they are not at all times possessed. The greater number are no friends to labor; yet I believe this vice to proceed more from a want of encouragement, and the small prices they receive for their products, than from laziness; this opinion is grounded upon the fact, that they are insensible to fatigue and exposure, which they endure with lightness of heart when called upon to do so in the course of their diverse occupations. They have much openness of spirit, and their children manifest good capacity when taught; still we could wish them to possess a little more perseverance. They are generally gay and fond of enjoyment; they affect music, there being but a few, comparatively speaking, who do not play on the violin. They are of a fine physical conformation, robust and full of health and of a swarthy hue. We see but slight dissensions in their families, which are for the most part numerous. The men commonly marry at the age of seventeen or eighteen, and as a general thing are of good morals. The half-breeds number over five thousand souls. They first established themselves at Pembina, near the mouth of the river of that name, about 1818, when they had with them a resident Canadian priest. They had also erected a church, and were engaged in the cultivation of the soil with great success when Major Long visited the country; and having ascertained the latitude, declared it

to be south of 49°; St. Louis being then the nearest American settlement of any size, and the distance to that city being very great, it was out of the question for the residents of Pembina to hold intercourse with it, except by incurring great expense as well as danger. The Hudson Bay Company profited by the inability of the colonists to communicate with the States, to give public notice that all those inhabitants who were established on the American side of the line should descend the Red river and make a settlement about the mouth of the Assiniboin river, under the penalty in case of failure so to do, of being refused all supplies from their store. At that time even more than at present, powder, balls, and net thread for fishing, were articles indispensably necessary to their subsistence. In short they were obliged to submit.

Since that period, the half-breeds have always spoken of Pembina as a spot for which they have a strong predeliction, and regretted the necessity which forced them to leave it. Gradually as the Mississippi settlements have approached towards us, until a line of communication has been opened with them within the last three or four years, and the half-breeds have felt the possibility of procuring the necessaries of life from that quarter as well as from the British side; from that time many of them have returned to the place of their birth, happy, at length, to be able to withdraw themselves from a state of vassalage in which they had been held as long as possible, by a company of monopolists held together by a sort of charter which invests them with power beyond control, and of which in our day, there exists no other example. This was the result of a concession made by a king alone without the assent of parliament, and consequently null according to the English constitution; nevertheless is this doubtful power vigorously enforced over a people ignorant, removed to the world's end, and who have consequently no means of making their complaints heard by the sovereign.

But behold how providential interference has prepared the road; for while, on the one hand, without foreseeing what was to come to pass, it was decided at Montreal to send a missionary among the Pembina half-breeds; on the other hand, the Congress of the United States have organized the Territory of Minnesota, and have sent troops to examine and, if need be, to protect the settlement at the same point. At this news, the half-breeds leaped with joy, and more than a thousand have caused their names to be inscribed on the list of the settlers at Pembina; others, not believing the report, wish to see with their eyes that measures have been adopted, which the partisans of the Hudson Bay Company asserted were impossible, because of the poverty of the American government. Before three years shall have elapsed, if the government of the United States in its liberality, and compassionating the situation of a people originally its citizens and for so long a time miserable, will extend its protecting hand to us, more than four thousand souls will soon embrace and enjoy the sweets of liberty, to them hitherto unknown.

The half-breeds are rather hunters than agriculturalists, and this is owing to their being unable to sell the produce of their farms, while on the other hand, they find it easy to sell the articles obtained in their hunts; still a large number apply themselves to both farming and hunting with much success.

Besides the reason already given why the half-breeds wish to reunite themselves to the United States, which is the arbitrary conduct of the Hud-

son Bay Company in its government, there are others why a return to Pembina is much desired, to wit:

First. The British settlement is situated about fifty miles from Lake Winnepeg. There they begin to plant during the latter part of April or beginning of May; all the seed springs out of the ground before the end of the latter month, and while the surface of the lake is still covered with ice. If it so happens that the wind blows from the north for three or four days, the atmosphere becomes considerably colder, and if it becomes calm during the night all the tender plants are destroyed by frost; while at the distance of 75 or 80 miles farther south, at Pembina, the cold is not felt so severely, nor does the frost ever injure the early plants. Experience has shown that European plants which could not be acclimated in the British colony, flourish well at Pembina.

Second. The half-breed hunters, as well from necessity as from inclination, do not feel that they have a right to pursue this avocation on American soil, in order to carry the products of their chase to the British side, which they have been obliged to do heretofore. Apart from this consideration, Pembina may be looked upon as the gate to the prairies where the hunts are made, and where the bison abounds. The fishery is also very productive; and although these natural advantages cannot be regarded as always to be depended on, still they are worthy of being taken into the account in an infant settlement; for should there occur a season of scarcity we should be glad to have recourse to these means of subsistence.

Third. There are salt springs to be found in abundance in the neighborhood, which might be rendered profitable, not only for the wants of the colony, but of trade with distant parts, so soon as the means of transportation are facilitated.

Fourth. The probability of a failure, at an early day, of wood for building as well as fuel, which threatens the British settlement, which will soon be obliged to supply itself from Lake Winnipeg at great expense, is another reason why Pembina is preferred, it being directly on the river; it has above it inexhaustible forests, extending even as far as Red Lake, from which wood can be taken down the current in rafts to any amount.

Fifth. There are also in near proximity probable, not to say certain indications that stone-coal and iron ores will be found to be abundant, the working of which, aided by the encouragement which the American government knows so well how to afford to its settlements, may soon, we flatter ourselves, form an important branch of commerce.

Sixth. Pembina is, besides, the point where all the inhabitants of the north-west will necessarily pass, in communicating with the United States, and is without dispute the only natural road to intercourse with the civilized world. We can come from England by the way of Hudson's Bay but once in a year, and this is across deep abysses, and for so few days only as serve to change the cargo, while from Pembina it would be easy to ascend the Red river in steamboats, as far as the projected settlement at the *end of the Sioux Woods*, about 300 miles, thence to the River St. Peters by canals, which could be easily made on the level prairies, and which are not obstructed by rocks, thence by the St. Peters river in steamboats.

This route once opened, there would be an immense quantity of fertile lands easy of cultivation ready to be settled, and the products of which would be of more importance than those of abundant mines.

Seventh. On the two sides of the Red river and of each of its tributaries,

spread out prairies, on which the thick high grass affords evidence of their value, composed, as they are, of light soil, which is destitute of stones. Hay is abundant everywhere, affording many facilities for raising cattle and sheep, which would become an important item of trade when transportation becomes more easy.

Eighth. In fine, the country is exceedingly healthy, afflicted with neither cholera nor fevers; the winds, which are almost constant, purify the atmosphere; and we frequently see cases of longevity which are rare elsewhere, such as children playing upon the knees of their great-grandfather. Although it sometimes happens that the weather is so cold as to freeze the mercury, this is rarely the case, and as a general thing, there is much less suffering from cold in these latitudes than there is from the summer heat in the southern States of America. The ground is frozen about the beginning of November, and is susceptible of cultivation near the end of April.

These are the principal advantages, without taking to account the precious hope of our soon becoming a party to the privileges of children of a republic glorious and powerful, which calls back the half-breeds to their ancient home, and which will continue to draw to the same place a large number of the employés of the Hudson Bay Company, so soon as they shall have fulfilled their engagements and become once more free.

I have already opened two schools for the instruction of the half-breeds; one in French and the other in Chippewa, for these tongues, conjointly with the Cree, are the only ones now in use here, and even the French is not much spoken. But the feeble means at my command thus far, do not permit me to put these schools upon a desirable footing. I hope much from the wisdom of those agents of the Government, who shall be charged with appropriating the money to be paid for the lands in this department.

One of the principal wants of a new settlement like ours is a court of justice; afterwards, capitalists, or the government itself, to originate works or manufactures which would require the labor of hands, &c.; then an accession of merchants who could afford to take the fruits of the earth in exchange for merchandize; or if these are not accorded us, we wish at least that those persons of influence and of liberal sentiments will use their interest with the government to procure for us these advantages, without which this colony must languish. We hope above all that our condition will touch your feelings in such wise as to secure for us your suffrages.

I have thus, although in a very imperfect manner, portrayed the character of our Indians, of the half-breeds, and the state of the country generally, which comprise the answer to the three questions contained in your letter, and to which you desired a reply; I should esteem myself fortunate if in doing so I have met and satisfied your wishes.

I am, with consideration, my dear major, your very humble servant,

(Signed) G. A. BELCOURT,
Missionary Priest.

Major Wood.

LETTRE DE M. BELCOURT, A.M. C.

ST. PAUL, 25 NOV., 1845.

MON CHER AMI : Je puis maintenant vous parler sciemment de la chasse du bison faite par les habitants de notre pays, ayant pu les accompagner dans une de leurs excursions. Je dois préalablement vous prévenir que la course d'automne est toujours celle où il y a moins de chasseurs, et cela pour les raisons suivantes. Une partie des métis, qui n'ont point les moyens d'hiverner dans la colonie, se dispersent de côté et d'autre, comptant pour subsister, pendant la saison rigoureuse, sur la chasse de la biche, de l'orignal et de l'ours; d'autres, espérant gagner davantage à la chasse des ainmaux à pellaterie qu'à celle du bison, survent pour cet objet le cours des rivières et les bords des lacs : de sorte qu'un tiers des hommes seulement forme le partie de la chasse d'automne.

Le retour de la dernière chasse d'été avait été pitoyable. Apres une marche très-longue, par une température excessivement chande, tous étaient revenus avec le quart de leurs charges, et n'emportant que la mauvaises provisions. Ce malheur était dû plutôt á leur manque d'union qû à la rareté des animaux: aussi plusieurs étaient découragés. Ceux-ci cependant reprirent espérance, loisqu'ils apprirent qu'un prêtre devait les accompagner. Avec la confiance d'un meilleur sort, l'on fit des préparatifs tant à St. Boniface qu'à la prairie du cheval Blanc ; et nous nous mîmes en marche, les uns après les autres, jusqu'ou 9 Septembre où je parti le dernier. Le rendez-vous était marqué sur la rivière Pembina, non pais à l'ancien establissement, mais à environ une journée de marche plus haut. J'y arrivai le troisieme jour après mon départ.

Du Sommet de la colline qui s' élève à plus de 200 pieds au-dessus du niveau de la rivière, je découvris le camp, composé d'environ 60 loges. Il était placé au milieu de prairies, dans lesquelles paissaient environ 300 chevaux et plus de 100 boeufs. Au loin, de jeunes chasseurs, suivant les détours de la rivière, revenaient chargés de gebier, tandis que, d'un autre côté, des enfants retournaient au camp, ployant sous le poids de leur pêche. Les charrettes se croisaient en tous sens, transportant du bois de chauffage, des essieux de réserve, des perches pour les loges, les grils et les cadres. Comme nous allions quitter le bois pour nous lancer sur une prairie immense comme la mer, il fallait se pourvoir de tons ces objets.

Jusqu'ici rien de fâcheux, si ce n'est un violent orage que j'endurai, *sub dio*, sur la montagne de Pembina, et encore n'oserai-je mentionner un accident si ordinaire aux voyageurs, si je n'eusse été fortement secoué par l'électricité du physicien suprême. Mon cheval fit deux ou trois pirouettes, et demeura abasourdá pendant quelques jours.

Le 14, par un temps chaud, nous levâmes le camp pour gravir la côte opposée. De là nous apercumes, comme l'océan avec ses vagues, cette prairie sans bornes, avec ses collines et ses vallons se succédant, dans une uniformité constante jusqu'au Missouri, j'oserais dire, jusqu'aux Montagnes Rocheuses.

Il nous fallait ici déterminer vers quel point l'horison nous devious nous diriger. Voyant que les chasseurs de la Riviere-Rouge ne s' étaient pas réunis à nous, nous crûmes de notre devoir de ne point longer la montagne de ce côté, de peur de leur nuire en *faisant lever les bisons* devant eux. D'un autre côté, nous savioncs qu'un certain nombre de métis avaient établi leurs quartiers d'hiver au bout de la Montagne à la Fortue et sur la Rivière á la Souris ; en conséquence nous n'avions point de chance prob-

able en marchant sur leurs brisées. On décida donc qu'il fallait prendre une direction mitoyenne, et le S. S. E. d'abord, puis ensuite le S. S. O. furent admis. Cette route devait nous conduire au *sac des Branches, Buttes des Trous, Lac du Diable, Petite Fourche de la Rivière à la Chayenne, Lac du Bois-blanc, Mason du Chien.* L'avis publiquement donné, et des guides nommés, on se mit en marche.

Les charrettes, au nombre de 213, s'avancaient sur trois colonnes, traînées les unes par des boeufs, les autres, par des chevaux. Elles formaient des lignes beaucoup plus longues qu'on ne l'imaginerait d'abord, si l'on ne savait qu'à chacune de ce voitures sont attachées des perches de 15 à 18 pieds de longueur.

Cependant des cavaliers se dispersaient dans toutes les directions, et disparaissaient dans l'élorgnement pour ne revenir que le soir au lieu indigné d'avance pour le campement. Comme d'habiles marins, ces enfants des prairies marchent des journées entières à travers des côteaux et des vallons qui, à l'oeil de l'étranger, n'offient rien de distinctif, et ils arrivent le soir, quelquefois même au milieu des ténèbres, précisément au point désigné.

Nous campâmes de bonne heure, attendant avec hâte le rapport des éclaireurs. Le premier qui parut fut mon chasseur; il n'avait point vu de bisons, mais, en revanche, il apportait deux grues, dont l'une mesurait huit pieds et trois ponces d'envergure. Cet oiseau, dont la chair est de mauvais goût, abonde dans cette partie du pays; il se nourrit de racines qu'il déterre et qu'il arrache avec son bec. Blessé, il devient un redoutable adversaire; alors portant la tête à la hauteur d'un homme, il poursuit á son tour le chasseur, et s'efforce de lui arracher les zeux. Il est arrive que de jeunes sauvages ont eu le ventre percé et les intestines dévorés par cet oiseau furieux.

Vers l'entrée de la nuit, tous étaient de retour, à l'exception de deux hommes; l'ou avait remarqué des traces toutes fraîches. Le lendemain, le nombre des découvreurs fut plus grand encore. Vers 10 heures du matin, les deux jeunes chasseurs qui avaient découché revinrent chargés de viande fraîche, et, le soir, cet article était en abondance. Mais viande de tanreau n'est pas très-agréable au palais, ni très-facile à digèrer: cependant ou me servit le meilleur morceau, la langue; " car, me dit-ou, vous n'êtes pas accoutumé à manger de cette viande, et en goûtant quelque autre piece vous prendriez le *mal de boeuf.*" Le mal de boeuf, comme ou peut le soupconner, n'est autre chose que l'indigestion. Cette viande paraissait avoir la consistance du cuir, et, comme la mastication n'occupe pas long-temps nes chasseurs bouillants de santé, ils en étaient parfois les dupes. Enfin nous pensions pouvoir rejoindre le lendemain les troupeaux de vaches.

Je ne soignis aux chasseurs, qui faisaient éclater la joie la plus vive et la plus bruyante. Nous avions a peine cheminé pendent une demi-heure que nous apercumes une bande de boeufs. On les reconnait, de fort loin, par leur manière de se tenir beaucoup plus éloignés les uns des autres que ne le font les vaches. Nous avançions au petit galop, et nous en étions à sept ou huit arpents, qu' ils paissaient encore paisiblement. Alors nous mîmes nos chevaux au pas; car, si l'on y va doucement, ils ne fuient que lorsqu'on est fort près d'eux.

Toutefois, peu soucieux de notre visite, ils donnaient des marques de leur mauvaise humeur. Les uns, de leurs pattes de devant, lançaient dans l'air des tourbillons de poussière; d'autres se roulaient sur la terre comme

les chevaux, puis, avec l'agilite d'un lièvre, se relavient tout-à-coup. Quelques-uns, plus soigneux de leur gravité, nous regardaient fixement, laissant échapper, de temps en temps, un beuglement sourd et comprimé; les mouvements saccadés de leur queue nous montraient cependant que notre présence ne leur était pas plus agréable qu'à leurs compagnons.

Enfin le signal est donné; nous lançons nos coursiers, et devant nous fuient avec légèreté ces épaisses et lourdes masses. Plusieurs sont renversés du premier coup; d'autres, se sentant mortellement blessés, s'arrêtent furieux, déchirant la terre ou la frappant des deux pieds de devant, comme des béliers. Sous une touffe serrée de poil, leurs yeux étincèlent de rage, et avertissent les plus intrépides chasseurs de se tenir à une distance respectueuse.

Cette course, qui dura un quart-d'heure, était à peine finie qu'on aperçut un nuage de poussière qui s'élevait du haut d'une colline, à plussieurs milles de nous. Je n'avais pas en le temps d'eu demander la cause, que chacun avait sauté sur son coursier, et criait en galloppant: *la vache! la vache!* l'on ne prit pas même le temps d'arracher la langue à une dizaine de gros boeufs, restés morts sur le champ. Bientôt tous les cavaliers étaient sur la hauteur d'où était parti le signal.

Arrivé sur les lieux, je m'imaginais voir de près ce qu'on m'annoncait avec tant d'assurance; mais, à ma grande surprise, de quelque côté que se dirigeassent mes regards, je n'apercevais rien. Enfin l'on me fit remarquer, à une distance de dix à douze milles, des points qui, par le mirage, paraissaient être des arbres; c'était là ce que nos chasseurs reconnaissaient être non pas des arbres, ni même des boeufs, mais des vaches.

Tous les chasseurs réunis ici etaient au nombre de 55. Les chevaux semblaient partager la joie et l'ardeur de leurs maîtres. Modérer l'âpreté du coursier était chose difficile; mais modérer celle du cavalier l'était bien davantage. Le grand point, si l'on veut réussir dans cette chasse, c'est d'avancer fort doucement jusqu'à une distance d'environ deux portées de fusil. Si, comme cela arrive lorsque les chasseurs n'ont personne pour les diriger, les meilleurs coursiers sont lancés de loin, les plus faibles ne peuvent plus atteindre leur proie; de là, discorde, querelles, haines et toutes leurs suites.

L'instinct des bisons les porte à s'assembler en masse lorsqu'ils sont attaques. Les boeufs qui sont éloignés des vaches se réunissent d'abord, puis fuient devant les chevaux jusqu' à ce qu'ils rejoignent les vaches; celles-ci se rassemblent à leur tour, et fuient devant les premiers, mais avec beaucoup plus de rapidité. Pour atteindre les vaches, il faut donc traverser l'épaisse phalange formée par les boeufs, et c'est là ce qu'il y a de plus dangereux. Voici un fait qui vient à l'appui. Pendant la chasse de l'été dernier, un sauvage, jeté loin de son cheval qu'un boeuf avait renversé, fut, pendant près d'un quart-d'heure, le jouet d'un de ces animaux furieux; tout en fuyant à la course, il lançait et relançait le malheureux chasseur à 15 ou 20 pieds en l'air, le rattrapant toujours sur ses cornes. Pour donner une faible idée de l'immense force de ces animaux, il suffit de dire qu'un d'eux, venant à traverser la file des charrettes, se porta sur une, et d'un coup de corne la fit pirouetter deux ou trois fois. Or cette voiture, trainée par un cheval, portait une charge de plus de mille livres.

Un autre danger qui n'est pas moindre est celui de se trouver dans la direction des balles; lançées de tout côté, elles sifflent d'une manière ef-

frayante au milieu de tourbillons de poussière, qui ne permettent pas de se voir à dix pas. Dernièrement, dans une de ces courses, un homme eut le ventre percé par une balle; heureusement cette blessure ne fut pas mortelle. En une autre occasion, la balle traversa le capot, la chemise, la peau et la chair d'un chasseur, et all s'arrêter sur les os de l'estomac. Par bonheur aucun de ces accidents fâcheux n'a attristé notre voyage. L'on peut croire qu'en vue de tous ces dangers le chasseur ne peut se défendre d'une certaine crainte, assez vive pour se peindre sur sa figure.

La rapidité avec laquelle ils déchargent leur fusil est étonnante: il n'est pas rare de voir trois bisons abattus par le même chasseur dans l'espace d'un arpent. Quelquesuns même tirent jusqu'à cinq fois, tandis que leur cheval parcourt cette distance à la course. Voici leur manière de charger: le premier coup seul est bourré; pour les suivants, ils amorcent, versent la poudre, puis ayant la bouche pleine de valles, ils en laissent tomber une dans le fusil; la salive l'y fait attacher à la pondre au ford du canon. Cependant le coursier est abandonné á lui même; mais il est si bien dressé, que, lorsque son maître se penche d'un côté ou d'un autre, il le comprend, et obéit à l'instant.

Après la première course, qui dura environ une demiheure, je comptai 169 vaches. Nous campâmes près de ce lieu. Le lendemain, dans une nouvelle course, ou en abattit 177. Le troisième jour, plusiers cavaliers se reposèrent; ceux qui coururant rappertèrent au camp 114 vaches; le quatrième jour, 168 vaches furent tuées. En tout c'était 628 vaches. On serait porté à croire que déjà nous devions avoir une charge suffisante pour nas 213 charrettes; il s'en fallait néanmoins de beaucoup que nous l'eussions: car une grande quantité de viandes est perdue par la manière dont on s'y prend ici pour dépecer et préparer la chair du bison.

La course finie, le chasseur place l'animal sur les genoux; puis il lui étend les pattes de derrière: cette position le sontient sur le ventre. On, commence par enlever la petite bosse; c'est une éminence de chair, d'environ trois livres, qui se trouve au haut du con, et tient à la grosse bosse. L'on ouvre ensuite la peau sur le dos, et on la lève; après quoi l'on *épare* l'animal. Voici les détails et la nomenclature de cette opération.

1° Les deux *dépouilles* se lèvent sur les côtés, depuis les épaules jusqu'aux hanches: elles sont séparées des viandes de dessous par une conche cartilagineuse ou plutôt une peau mince;

2° Les *filets*, nerfs enveloppés de viande qui lient les palerons aux hanches;

3° Les *bricoles*, deux bandes de gras qui descendent de dessus les épaules jusqu'an bas du con;

4° Les *petits filet, du con*, petits nerfs envelloppés de viande, qui prennent naissance vis-à-vis l'extrémité des gros filets;

5° Le *dessus de croupe*, qui se prend au haut des flancs;

6° Les *des épaules ;*

7° Les *dessons d'épaule*, lits de viande entre les côtes du brochet et les épaules;

8° Le *pis*, partie grasse qui contient le pis; elle s'étend sous le ventre et dans les flancs;

9° Le *ventre*, partie charnue qui tient an bout des côtes, et sontient les intestines;

10° La *pause*; que les métis regardent comme un morceau friand;

11° La *grosse bosse*, qui a sa plus grande hauteur vis-à-vis les palerons;

elle est formée par des as minces, larges, inclinés en arrière, étant dans le squellette ce qu'est la rangée d'arêtes sur le dos des poissons. Cette partie a un goût déliceux.

12° Le *gras* on *suif* du dedans du corps ;

13° Les *plats-côtés on côtelettes ;*

14° La *croupe ;*

15° Le *brochet,* viande qui couvre l'estomac ;

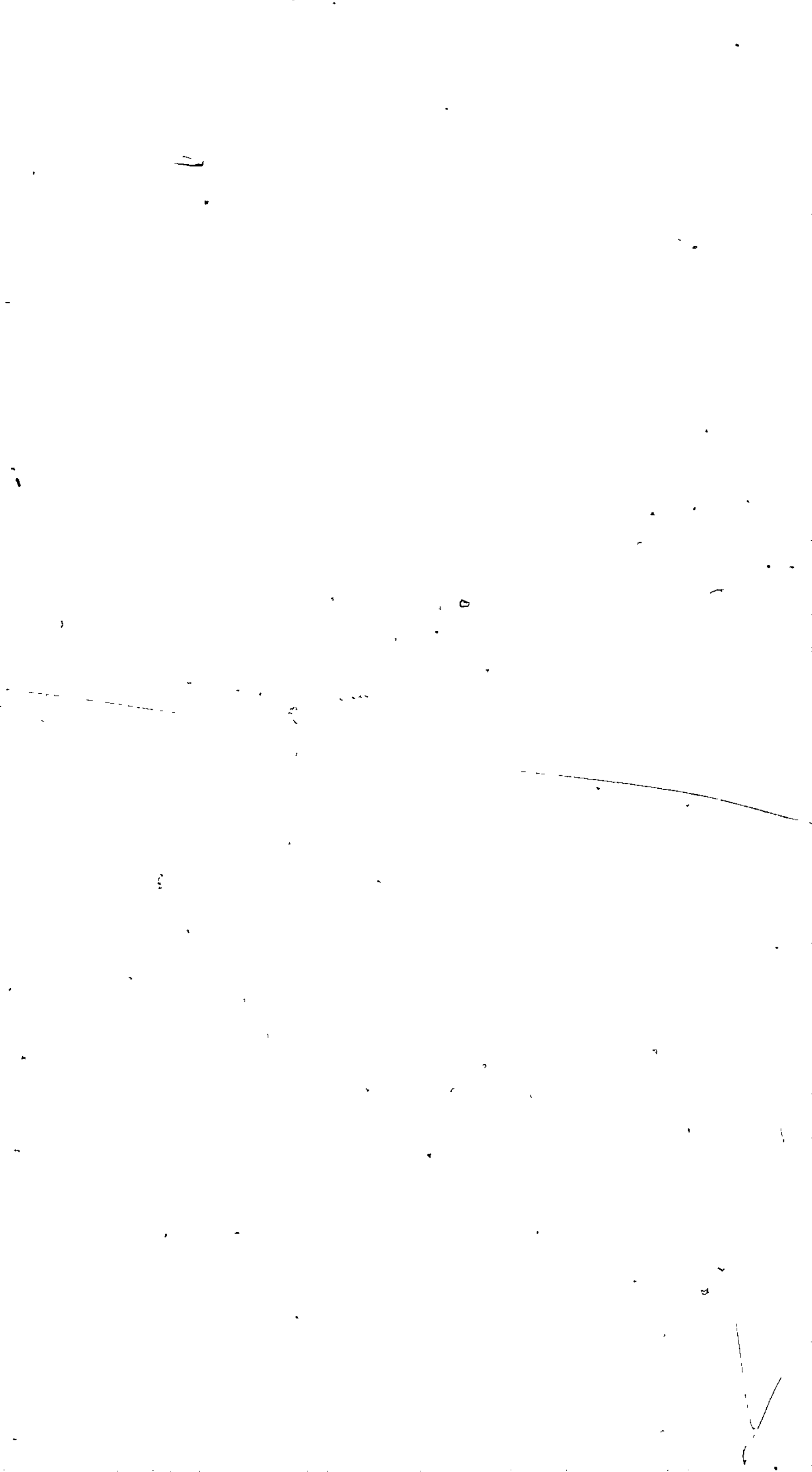
16° La *lanque.*

Le reste demeure sur le champ ; c'est l'héritage des loups. *Eparer* est une opération qui fait suer le chasseur ; nos gens y déploient une habileté et une rapidité vraiment étonnantes. On en a vu, en dix heures de temps, tuer dix animaux, et les éparer à eux seuls. La forte transpiration les attérant considérablement, ils out le soin de se munir d'un petit baril d'eau, transporté sur les charettes qui *vout à la viande.* On donne ce nom aux voitures qui se rendent au lien de chasse, et qui servent à rapporter les viandes au camp. Sans ce secours, ils souffrent horriblement de la soif; le moyen qu'ils emploient pour diminuer ce tourment, est de manger crus les feuillets on les parties cartilagineuses des narines. Si la farin les prend, ils avalent les rognous, qu'on fait cuire en les trempant dans le fiel ; d'autres, dit-on ne prennent pas même, cette précaution et les dévorent tout crus.

Toutes les viandes sont tranchées par les femmes, qui les dévoulent dans leurs mains, donnant une épaisseur d'un quart de ponce à cette longue lanière, qu'elles étendent ensuite sur des grils, comme des pièces de linge. Ces grils sont formés de petites perches posées horizontalement, et à deux ou trois rangs, sur des trepieds de bois. Après quelques jours, ces viandes sont sèches ; on plie, et on attache en ballots du poids de 60 à 70 livres, les dessus de croupe, les dépouilles, les dessoux d'épaule, les grosses bosses et les ventres. Le reste est pilé à coups de fléaux, des peaux servant d'aire. Cette viande, ayant été préalablement exposée à une forte chaleur sur un gril de bois vert, est devenue cassante et facile à réduire en poudre. La graisse de l'intérieur, hachée et fondue dans de grandes chandières de tôle, est versée sur la viande pilée, que l'on brasse avec des pelles jusqu'à ce que toutes les parties soient bien imbibées ; puis on emplit de ce mélange des sacs de peau, dont on ne s'est pas donné lá peine d'ôter le poil. On appelle *taureaux* ou *pimikehigan* les sacs ainsi remplis. Si la graisse qu'on a employée est celle du pis, ce sont des *taureaux fins.* Quelques-uns y mêlent des fruits séchés, tels que poires, cerises ; on les apelle alors *taureaux* à graines. Les gastronomes jugent la première espèce bonne ; la seconde, meilleure ; la troisième, très-bonne. Pour donner une idée de la diminution de ces viandes, il suffit de faire observer qu'on ne tire d'une vache qu'un demi-taureau et les trois-quarts d'un ballot de viande ; de manière que les plus économes calculent qu'il faut huit ou dix vaches pour former une charge.

Pour mettre les peaux en *parchemni,* après les avoir tendues sin des cadres, on les gratte en-dedans avec un os aiguisé, et en-dehors avec une petite gratte coupante, propre à enlever le poil ; c'est là l'ouvrage des femmes. Les hommes concassent les os, qu'ils font bouillir dans l'eau pour en extraire la graisse de moëlle, employée pour les fritures. Cette graisse est conservée dans les vessies des animaux. Il faut faire consommer les os de deux vaches, avant d'obtenir assez de graisse pour emplir une vessie, qui en contient 12 livres.





Les quadrupédes de ces prairies sont le bison ; le cabris, espèce de gazelle ; le chevreuil ; le petit chien de prairie, qui tient du renard ; le blaireau ; le lièvre, différent de celui des bois qu'il surpasse en grandeur et en agilité ; le rat, ressemblant à l'écureuil et se multipliant prodigieusement ; le loup, en nombre immense, et dont les hurlements empêchent de dormir, ceux qui n'y sont pas accoutumés ; enfin l'ours blanc, dont un individu fut vu, cette année, au lac du Bois-Blanc, sans qu'on ait pu le tuer.

Tandis que nous longions le lac du Diable, nappe d'eau d'environ 10 milles de long sur 2 de large, quelques cavaliers poursuivirent une petite bande de vaches. L'un d'eux étant tombé de sa monture ne put rejoindre son cheval, qui continua lestement la poursuite comme s'il eût dû faire grand ravage ; tant ces animaux ont de passion pour la chasse. Voici un trait d'un autre, coursier plus intelligent. Son maître, ayant plusiers chevaux, laissa celui-ci, son favori, pour qu'il se reposât, et en partant il recommanda à sa femme de l'attacher ; ce qui ne fut point fait. S'apercevant qu'on était parti sans lui, le noble animal donna après nous, nous joignit au moment de la course, s'elanca dans la mêlée, comme s'il eût été fouetté ; puis, suivant la vache dans tous ses détours, il semblait attendre qu'elle tombât. La course finie, il s'en revint hennissant auprès de son maître, qu'il sut bien retrouver, quoique les chasseurs fussent dispersés ca et là sur une étendue de plusieurs milles. Quand on charge de campement, les loges se trouvent dans des positions si différentes, qu'un homme cherche quelque-fois long-temps pour retrouver son gîte ; mais le cheval, quoiqu'il ait été laissé libre à quelque distance, revient à une heure marquée ; sans faire aucun détour, il va droit à la loge de son maître, et frappant la porte du pied, il demande impérieusement le prix de la journée, sa mesure d'orge.

Le 25 nous campâmes sur la rivière Chayenne, la branche la plus longue de la Rivière-Rouge ; nous y vîmes d'immenses troupeaux de vaches. Sur un espaçe d'environ un arpent en superficie, je comptai 220 de ces animaux ; on les bords de cette rivière étaient ainsi couverts à perte de vue et dans toutes les directions. Qu'on juge maintenant, s'il est possible, de la richesse de ces prairies. N'est-il pas déplorable que la main généreuse, qui depuis si long-temps distribue le pain quotidien à tant de peuples, n'en soit pas encore connue ? Les métis chrétiens ne sont rien comparés à tant de nations qui se nourrissent constamment et exclusivement du produit de cette chasse .

Comme j'accompagnais presque toujours les chasseurs lorsqu'ils quit taient le camp, je fus témoin de leur situation périlleuse dans la première course qu'ils firent en ce lieu. S'étant mis à la poursuite d'une nombreuse bande de vaches, ils en étaient an plus fort de l'ordeur et de la vîtesse, lorsqu'ils arrivèrent, pêle-mêle avec ces animaux, sur le haut d'une côte escarpée et semée de roches, où culbutèrent et roulèrent ensemble vaches, chevaux, cavaliers, dans une telle confusion, qu'on ne peut s'expliquer comment aucun d'eux ne soit resté mort sur le. coup, ou assommé contre les pierres, ou écrasé par ceaux qui suivaient. Un seul homme perdit connaissance, et se remit bientot ; une couple de chevaux se relevèrent en boîtant et quelques vaches eurent les pattes cassées. Les cavaliers désarconnés se relevèrent en poussant des cris de joie pour rassurer leurs compagnons, et se remirent à la poursuite, faisant claquer le fonet à qui mieux mieux, afin de réparer le temps perdue ; car, comme on peut le penser, la vache ne les avait pas attendus. Quand ji me jus assuré qu'il n'était rien arrivé

de fâcheux, je continuai à suivre, jusqu' à ce qu' étant parvenu à une prarie unie, je m'élancai parmi les chasseurs, et abattis une vache. Je m'en tins là, quoique je me sentisse tenté d'aller plus loin ; mais je n'avais joint de raison de m'exposer au danger et au blâme.

Un chasseur, au retour de cette course, ayant suivi la petite rivière dans ses détours, avait remarqué des traces laissées par le castor. Le lendemain, il tendit piéges, et en tua cinq. J'allai moi-même voir leur chaussée, ouvrage vraiment admirable. En cet endroit, il n'y a debois que de petits saules de la grosseur du doigt; cependant cette chaussée est si solide qu'elle sert de pont au bison: je pus avec facilité la passer à cheral.

Depuis plusieurs jours le camp était dans une disette entière de bois, la provision que nous en avions faite à Pembina ètant épuisée. On se servit de fiente, de côtes et de palerous de vache, pour alimenter nos feux et faire cuire les viandes nécessaires à l'usage journalier. Ce feu est ardent, surtout quand les fumiers sont bien secs; mais il laisse échapper une fumée à laquelle un nez étranger ne se fait pas aisément. Nos travaux souffraient donc de la disette de bois; le soleil n'avait plus asez de force pour sécher les viandes, ce qui exigeait l'aide du feu. Nous fûmes en conséquence obligés de quitter ce lieu pour nous rendre aux îles du *Lac au Bois-Blanc*, c'est-à-dire aux bouquets de bois qui environnent ce petit lac.

Ce lieu es des plus pittoresques, et offre les points de vue les plus beaux et les plus varies. Le lac, qui n'est qu'un bassin entouré de collines fort hautes, renferme une eau très-salée; mais il est environné de sources d'eau douce assez abondantes. Les pentes des collines sout boisées de chêne, de frêne et de bois-blanc. De leur sommet, ou apercoit à une petite distance, la *Maison du chien*, colline qui sert de ve dette aux *Sioux*, pour reconnaître leurs ennemis; d'un autre côte, sout les hauteurs appelés *Grands-Côteaux :* elles se prolongent et long du Missouri, sur une ligne parallèle aux Montagnes-Rocheuses. De notre campement, sur un bon cheval, ou pouvait se tendre au Missouri en une journée de marche, la distance n'étant que de 25 lieues.

Arrivés dans ce campement le 2 octobre, nous y demeurâmes jusqu'an 16, ayant sans cesse le bison autour de nous en très-grande abondance. Le 10, il y eut une forte chute de neige, et le thermomètre se tenant constamment pendant deux jours à 5° au-dessoux au zéro de Réaumur, la glace devint solide sur le lac. Six jours après, la température d'adoucit, et la neige disparut. Ce froid ne retardait en rien nos travaux; an contraire, chacun craignant un hiver prématuré travaillait nuit et jour; les plus paresseux se faisaient violence, de peur que les plus diligents, ayant fini leur charges, no repartissent sans les attendre.

Je n'aurais pas voulu laisser ces troupeaux sans prendre une juste idée de leur taille et de leur conformation. Comme dans les autres espèces, le mâle es plus gros que la vache: ses cornes paraissent à peine au milieu d'une touffe de poils qui lui couvrent une partie de la tête et du con, et lui donnent une mine tout-à-fait étrange: la vache, au contraire n'est point pourvue de cette crinière, de sorte que ses comes saillantes la fout reconnaître de lien. Je mesurai un boeuf de taille moyenne, et je lui trouvai 8 pieds et 9 pouces de tour; 9 pieds et 2 pouces de longueur; 20 pouces du nez au haut du front: 1 pied et 3 pouces de queue: 14 pouces entre les deux yeux. La plus longue côte de la bosse, inclinée en arrière de 20 degrés sur l'épine Aorsale, avait 20 pouces de longueur.

Quoique le voyage d' été soit plus favorable pour prendre les veaux et

les priver, j'eu tentai néaumoins l'essai à ce voyage. Un chasseur en poursuivit un, et le prit au collet; mais, après cinq ou six jours, il mourut d' avoir trop couru, me dit-on. Pour moi, je pense que ce fut d'ennui, car il refusa de manger pendant ces six jours. Au printemps, ces veaux se privent facilement; et quand ils sont demptés, ils deviennent tres-utiles. Un habitant qui en avait dressé un à la charrue, labourait sans difficultié avec cet animal seul.

Enfin, le 16 octobre, nous repartîmes, emportant sur nos voitures 1,776 vaches tuées par 55 chasseurs. Cette viande formait 228 *taureaux*, 1,213 ballots de viande sèche, 166 *boskoyas* ou sacs de graisse, pesant chacun 200 livres, et 556 vessies de graisse de moëlle, de 12 livres chaque: le tout, calculé au taux le plus modéré, valant un peu plus de dix-sept cents livres sterling. Les frais de voyage, gages d'employés ne s'elevant guère qu'à £200, il reste £1,500, gagnés par 55 chasseurs dans l'espace de moins de deux mois, à compter du jour du départ au jour du retour.

Nous étions en tout 309 âmes; j'avais catéchise régulièrement 68 enfants; la messe s'etait dite tous les jours; Dieu ètait servi et glorifié par l'union qui régnait entre tous les membres de notre petite communanté. Deux fois le feu avait été mis à la prairie, et chaque fois une pluie providentielle était tombée à propos pour l'éteindre. Pleins de reconnaissance, nous nous en retournious, chacun rendant grâces à Dieu du bonheur qu'ils avaient eu d'être accompagnés d'un de leurs pasteurs; car c' était à son influence qu'ils attribuaient les énormes charges qu'ils remportaient.

Il est facile de comprendre que, s'il ne se trouve quelqu'un qui joigne à l'influence de son caractére la force des paroles pour maintenir la concorde et l'union, bientôt le désordre s'etablit parmi ces hommes ardents. Le plus prêt s'élance vers le troupeau; il n'est plus possible de le joindre. Mettant seul en finite une proie, à laquelle tous eussent pris part, il revient avec 2 ou 3 vaches, lorsqu'on aurait per en tuer deux ou trois cents. C'est ce qui avait fait leur malheur, depuis que des prêtres avaient cessé de les accompagner dans leurs expéditions de chasse. Ainsi, pendant que paisibles au même endroit, nous amassions à loisir les provisions que nous choississons; d'un autre côté, les chasseurs de la Rivière Rouge, livrés à la discorde, voyaient sans cesse fuir leur proie qu'ils ne pouvaient atteindre, et se désespéraient de leur peu de succés. En conséquence, ils reviurent à demi-chargés de viande verte ou viande de taureau. Un semblable voyage ne saurait couvrir les frais qu'il entraîne.

Il est indubitable qu'un piêtre ferait beaucoup de bien en suivant les chasseurs, nou-seulement sous le rapport matériel, mais encore sous le rapport moral et religieux. Sa présence arrêterait bien des désordres du côté des moeurs; il pourrait catéchiser les enfants qui, sans cesse errants ne peuvent recevoir ailleurs l'instruction religieuse; son influence s'étendrait jusques sur les sauvages, à la conversion desquels, étant parmi eux, il travaillerait plus efficacement. J'eu parle par l'expérience acquise pendant ce voyage: tous ceux que j'ai rencontrés, à la première invitation que je leur en ai faite, sont venus écouter la parole de Dieu. Quant à nos Chrétiens, il était édifiant de voir avec quel empressement ils assistaient aux catéchismes. Plusieurs ont entendue la messe tous les jours; et tous les dimanches, 10 à 15 s'approchaient de la sainte table. En ces jours, je donnais une instruction en langue du pays; cette attention plaisait infiniment aux métis, accoutumés à n'entendre prêcher qu'en langue francaise, qu'ils comprennent.

Pour notre retour, il fallait face au nord ; nous avions devant nous une marche de dix jours surune plaine découverte. Pendant cette marche, nous ne pouvions allumer de feu, quoique chaque nuit le thermomètre de Réamur marquât 3 à 4 degrés au-dessons de zéro : car nous étions dépourvus de bois, que la pesanteur de nos charges nous avait empêchés d'y ajouter. Comme nous chiminions leutement, j'eus le loisir d'examiner des pétrifications tres-intéressantes, même pour ces lieux où elles sont tres-communes. C'étaient des ormes dont les racines et le tronc pétrifiés se sont unis au sol.

Cette pierre se feud comme le bois retient la couleur et le fil de celui dont elle a été formée et aiguise tres-bien les outils.

Le 22, je pris les devants, accompagné d'un métis, qui, comme moi, avait deux bons chevaux de relai. Nous partions du point où le 48° de lat. N. est coupé par les 99° 30' long. O., et nous avions à nous diriger vers le N.N.E. A 2 heures de l'après-midi, nous tombâmes sur un petit parti de métis anglais, qui étaient venus faire *viande fraîche* autour du *Lac de Roches*. De temps en temps, pendant le cours de la journée, nous vîmes de grandes bandes de vaches et de boeufs. Le soir, nous campâmes, sans feu et sans eau, par une température glaciale. Nous ne pûmes prendre de nourriture, ce qui augmenté notre soif; bref, notre position était telle que nous devions être matineux : au lever du soleil, le lendemain, nous étions sur la rivière Pembina, à 5 ou 6 lieues de notre couchée. Là nous trouvâmes du bois et de l'eau, qui nous permirent d'apaiser notre faim. Le 23 nous couchâmes à la *Rivière aux Ilets de Bois*, et le 24, à 11 heures du matin, j'étais à St. Paul, situé au 50° lat. N., et 97° 40' long. O. de Greenwich.

Je suis, etc.

(*Copy.*) FORT SNELLING, *October 1st*, 1849.

MAJOR : I have the honor to report to you my arrival at this place on the 26th ultimo, and not finding you here, I proceeded immediately, in compliance with your instructions, to prepare a map of the route pursued this summer by your command.

In reference to the notes taken on my return to this place, you will find them embodied on the map. The depth of water in the Red river is as follows. From Pembina to Red lake river, 16 feet, muddy bottom. From Red lake river to Goose river, 12 feet, bottom in some places gravelly. From Goose to Shayen river, 9 feet; rapid about one mile long half-way between Goose and Shayen rivers, with 5 feet of water upon it. From Shayen to post, about 6 feet; bottom gravelly, and many large rocks. The portion of Red river included between the road and Otter-tail lake is shallow, and intersected by numerous rapids. It passes through Leaf mountain. It is heavily timbered throughout, from a point 20 miles east of road to the lake, and there is little or no prairie on the west of Otter-tail lake. It is swampy from the mouth of the Bois des Sioux to the road.

There are three portages between Otter-tail lake and the Crow-wing river : the first about one mile long; the second about 20 yards; and the third about half-a-mile. The Crow-wing is wide, but very shallow. Otter-tail lake is about ten miles long, and 4 or 5 wide; its greatest length in a direction N. 60° E. No islands. As with the Mississippi, the Red



river is much more heavily timbered on its right than on its left bank. The map I leave for you with Mr. Nelson, contains, I think, all you will find necessary in connection with your report. If anything should be wanting, I can communicate it to you from St. Louis.

Having thus complied with your instructions, and understanding from Colonel Loomis that you are not soon expected back, I have determined, upon consultation with some of the officers of the post, and in view of the conversations I have had with you on the subject, to repair to St. Louis. I am the more anxious to do so as I learn by letters from home that my father is very sick.

I have the honor to be, with great respect, your obed't serv't,

(Signed) JOHN POPE,
Bret. Capt. T. E.

Brevet Major S. Woods, 6th Infantry,
Commanding expedition to Red river.

(*Copy.*) Fort Snelling, *October* 3*d*, 1849.

Gentlemen: It is with much regret I find myself unable to furnish you, as you requested, with a detailed account of the expedition of the past summer to the northern portion of your territory. I have been so unwell for several days as to be incapable of attending to my own business here; and I now discover that I have barely time to arrange my affairs so as to enable me to depart for Washington on the next boat.

regret this the more, as I have traversed portions of the country not before examined; and am satisfied that nothing more is necessary for the rapid progress of Minnesota, than a fair statement of the numerous advantages it offers to persons immigrating to the west. The fertility of the soil, and the many and valuable water privileges embraced within the boundaries of this territory, so far exceed anything I had previously supposed, that I am at a loss to express myself with sufficient force to set before the country, in their true lights, the remarkable features of this portion of the north-west. The Mississippi and Lake Superior on the east, the Red river in the center, and the Minnesota or St. Peters on the south, enclose almost an island, unparallelled for the advantages it offers to the manufacturer and farmer. The only difficulty (and that is by no means universal,) is the scarcity of wood.

This difficulty is almost entirely confined to the west side of the Red river of the north; but the heavy timber, abundant on all the numerous tributaries of this stream from the west, almost does away any fear on this subject.

The numerous lakes on the maps, so far from indicating a low or swampy region, are surrounded with high rolling country, densely covered with oak, and the other forest trees common to this latitude, and are connected with each other by streams which, with their numerous rapids, afford an inexhaustible water power.

These remarks are peculiarly applicable to that portion of Minnesota territory embraced between the mouth of Crow-wing river and the head of Red river and Red lake. A more beautiful and fertile country than the portion, through which I recently passed, I believe does not exist. The region bordering on the lower Red river presents no elevated country, but is composed of the richest vegetable mould, three or four feet deep, and requiring hardly any attention to make it produce most abundantly. The

Red river itself is heavily timbered, on both banks, to its point of intersection with the parallel of 49 degrees north latitude, and is navigable for boats of three or four feet draught of water, for four, and some seasons five months in the year, for 500 miles, and to a point within 125 miles of the Mississippi.

I cannot, in this short communication, sufficiently set forth to you the vivid and most favorable impressions I have conceived of your territory. I think it merely necessary to show to the world the actual state of things to ensure its rapid advancement. A portion of the country embraced between Otter-Tail lake, one of the sources of the Mississippi and Red lake, has never been explored. Would it not be advisable for your delegate in Congress to procure, this winter, an appropriation for that purpose? Having begun the exploration, I shall, during the winter, execute a map, and make a report of the region I have seen. It would, truly, be a pleasing duty should I be selected to complete the examination next season.

As I feel deeply interested in the prosperity and welfare of the half-breed residents on the northern frontier of your territory, from having observed their activity, industry, and law-abiding character, I am induced to offer to your notice, as the persons most proper to bring such a subject to the attention of your legislature, some hints as to the proper course to be adopted to ensure the protection of these people, and the foundation o a successful and prosperous settlement along that border. The success o this settlement I regard as the more important, as it is directly in contact with the possessions of the Hudson's Bay Company, who now exercise a paramount sway within the American territory, and who are, every year, drawing from this country, by their fur trade, an immense revenue.

The whole of the Red river settlement was, at one time, within what are now the possessions of the United States; but as soon as this fact became known, the half-breeds were actually forced, by the Hudson's Bay Company, to remove to the British side of the line. Almost all the trapping and hunting is now done within the limits of the territory of Minnesota; and as it has been apparent that no protection was afforded by our government, and great favors are shown by the company to those residing on English soil, it is not to be wondered at that the greater portion of the half-breeds continue to remain north of the line. They are, at present, entirely dependent for their winter's supply of provisions upon the buffalo hunting on this side, and share equal privileges, as matters now stand, with those residing on American soil.

Three things only are necessary to establish a prosperous and populous settlement on the American side, within your territory, and these can at once be effected by the action of your legislature, with the aid of your executive and judicial officers: 1st, Let the law against the encroachments of the citizens or subjects of foreign countries upon our territories be enforced; 2d, Memorialize the general government to extinguish the Indian title to the lands in that quater, and then extend the laws of Minnesota over the people of the settlement, by establishing courts of justice, and appointing official persons to regulate their affairs; 3d, Throw open, by means of roads and other facilities, the trade and commerce of the Mississippi, and introduce among them the currency of the United States, now much less valued than the notes of the Hudson's Bay Company, payable *sixty days after sight in London.*

These things they certainly have a right to claim; and I sincerely hope

the legislature of Minnesota will adopt, as early as practicable, some means of alleviating the present condition of these people, and of effecting objects so desirable as those I have mentioned.

I am, with great respect, your obedient servant,

JOHN POPE.

Messrs. McLean & Owens.